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AIR modeller

49

ISSUE

August / Sept 2013

£6.50 UK \$14.95

www.airmodeller.com



ALBERT TURECZEK BUILDS
ITALERI'S NEW WESSEX HU-5

ROYAL AIR FORCE WESTLAND
WESSEX



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AFV Modeller is published Bimonthly by
AFV Modeller Ltd
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Stannington
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ISSN 1747-177X



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ROYAL AIR FORCE

WESTLAND **HU-5** WESSEX

The Westland Wessex is a British turbine powered version of the American Sikorsky S-58. In 1956 Westland Helicopters received a HSS-1 as a pattern for license manufacturing the helicopter for the Royal Navy as a submarine hunter.

The helicopters entered service in 1958 and were designated HAS 1 and HAS 3. The Royal Air Force showed interest as well and took delivery of their version, the HC-2 in early 1962. Later followed the versions HCC 4 and HU Mk 5. The British helicopters were powered by a Rolls Royce Gnome turbine and had a long and distinguished service career. They even saw combat action in the South Atlantic. In all 378 aircraft were built. Australia was the sole export customer to the type. The last one was retired in 2003.

Italeri released the kit late in 2012. There are not an awful lot of models around from this remarkable helicopter and the news of a quaterscale release of this kit even added to the excitement. It quickly became the talk of the 'town' We decided to take a closer look!

You get a box filled with light grey plastic. Even though the model has relatively large proportions, there is not a frightening amount of sprues to meet the eye on opening the box. Surface detail is good, the fit we will have to talk about. There is a large, colourful, well-printed and comprehensive decal sheet, a little etched fret and some netting. It is only possible to build one version in one configuration. Markings are provided for three Royal Navy helos and for one Royal Air Force machine.





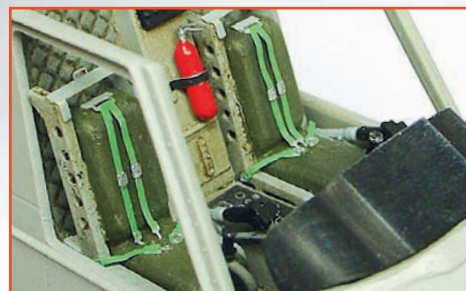
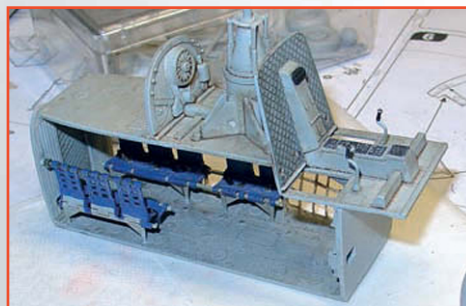
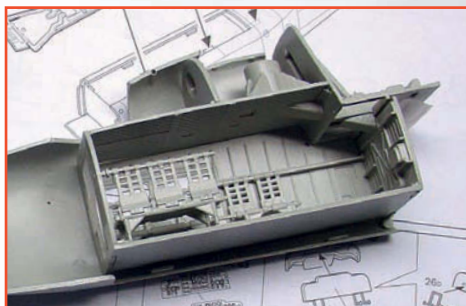
ALBERT TURECZEK MODELS ITALERI'S 1:48TH WESSEX.

CONSTRUCTION

Building sequence starts with the cabin, which is combined with the upstairs flight deck and the main rotor gearbox. The flight deck on the Wessex is situated high and accessible either through the cabin roof or from the outside via steps in the airframe. The whole section builds into a nice box, which can be built right into the two fuselage halves upon completion, without fitting problems.

The pilot seats are fitted with belts from the etched fret, but there are no belts for the nicely moulded benches in the cabin. The cabin inside is very visible through the large side door. Therefore I decided to add seat belts and a cargo net there.

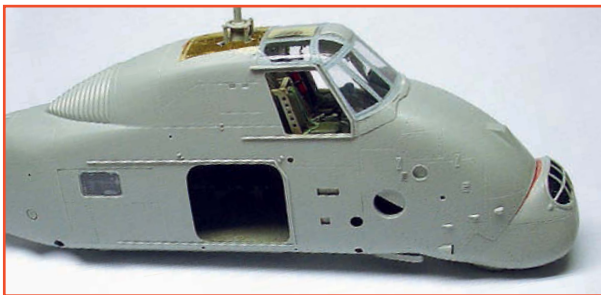
You have a choice between a decal for the instrument panel and a special decal, depicting only the instrument roundels to go with a photo etch frame on top of it. That's the option I chose. Even though the black and white instrument dials are printed a little off centre it works great with the photo etch part, which adds a nice depth into this important feature.



The bulged side windows present a problem if you want to display them closed as they do not fit the frame and will have to be reshaped to fit from round to square. There is quite some details on the inside of the gearbox, but once the hull is closed and the photo etched grill is in place, very little of it will be revealed to the eye. After closing the two fuselage halves the nose will have to be assembled.



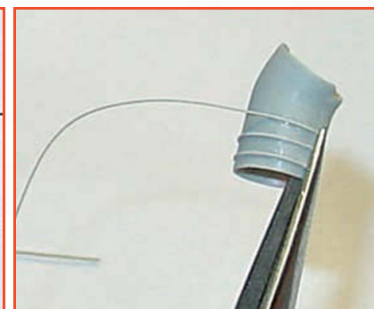
The nose part is made up of two assemblies combined with the characteristic droopy Wessex nose and the large exhausts of the Rolls Royce Gnome engine on both sides. The fit of this entire sub-assembly is not breathtaking and you will face a lot of gaps and unaligned surfaces and edges. Quite a bit of filler and some extensive sanding will have to be put on the working schedule here. Not exactly the thing you would expect from a modern, brand new kit. The bit of mesh provided with the kit goes here as a filter for the air intakes of the Turbines.



For the installation of the nose and especially for the installation of the Window parts I used my Touch-n-flow liquid glue set. It comes from Flex-I-file and is distributed from Albion Alloys. I owe one since my last visit to Telford and it comes in very handy if you have to restrain the application of glue to a minimum area to avoid damage to crispy surface details, but still need a firm and stable connection.



The exhausts are made up from two halves, which have to be glued together and that spells trouble. The fit is not good and the three raised lines on the outside of the exhausts will almost certainly be damaged when you have to sand them to shape. This is such an important feature on the helicopter and will present a focal point on the model. I decided for a different approach all together. The parts are too bulgy, too thick and the fit is poor. I glued them solidly together and sanded them down. This resulted in a total loss of the raised lines, which I recreated with thin stretched sprue. Thereafter I added two different shades of bare metal foil to the outside and thinned the inside ultra thin towards the edges. After that they were ready to be installed with a little piece of tissue glued to the base of the exhausts and painted black. If you do not carry out this operation you just might see through the inside of the exhausts and all the way through to the other side, not what you want!





The landing gear, or the legs are a prominent feature to the Wessex as well. They make the machine appear like a giant insect. The kit part fit extremely well into the fuselage holes, which makes dry fit and handling through the painting session a whole lot easier. The problem with the parts is that they are too fragile. That in combination with the use of a soft plastic, typical for Italeri, makes them very vulnerable. Mine broke several times and they had to be re-enforced.

That is not really that bad as the legs can do with a bit of extra detailing anyway.

I added pressure lines and cables here for the flotation devices and oxygen bottles, which I chose for my version. The Fuel dump pipes are situated on the belly and I used Albion's Slide to fit tubing here. 1mm aluminium tubing could be cut to the right length and shape and is a real improvement on the kit part.



PAINTING



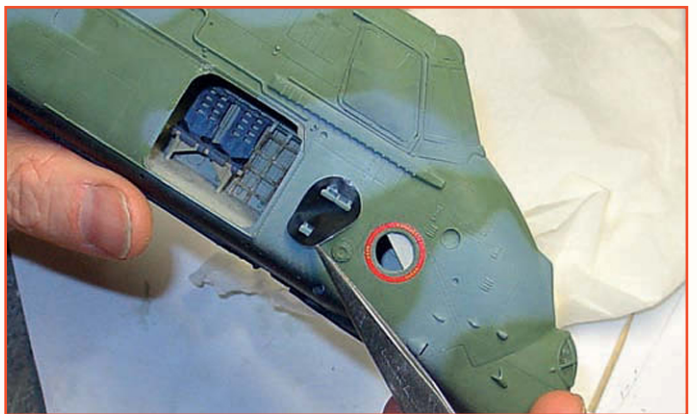
Painting was straightforward and I used Testors middle blue and 117 US Light green from Humbrol for my camo pattern with a black bottom. Weathering commenced in a traditional way with oils and pastels.



Decaling was without challenges except if you choose the version I did you will have to seriously resize the light blue tail band, typical for the Cyprus based machines, as it does not fit the fuselage at all. The main rotor blades come with sag, which works well and adds to the overall nice appearance of the model.



For the correct stencilling you will have to check references as I noted several divergences between my references and the suggested options by Italeri.





CONCLUSION

The Wessex HU 5 from Italeri is a good kit and will be welcomed by many. It does however not come without its troubles, the soft plastic and the poor fit for a modern kit, especially around the nose, are the main pitfalls. There are many exciting and colourful paint schemes for this odd looking machine, and by now the aftermarket will presumably be buzzing with additions and alternatives for the suggested version from Italeri.





I have always been fascinated by the Westland Wessex's very special appearance and I always wanted one. This was made possible through the new Italeri kit, which deserves commendation even though they got the name on the box wrong. It is not a UH- 5 but a HU-5.



The Kit

The 2005 Hasegawa kit is unquestionably the best on the market at present in this scale, the moulding is very fine with clean engraving over the light grey plastic. Hasegawa released another version of the plane, the "E", the single-seater which is also magnificent and also the Growler. It is a model which can very easily be built 'out of the box' if you choose a closed cockpit but I added some resin additions to boost the levels of details.



Florent Welter models a US Navy 'VFA-102 Diamondbacks F/A-18F using Hasegawa's 1:48 kit.

The Aircraft

Entering service with the US Navy in 1999 to replace the venerable F-14 Tomcat, Super Hornet is one of the rare armament programs to have met its planned deadlines and budgets. McDonnell Douglas reworked the Hornet design to produce a completely new aircraft.

- An enlarged airframe.
- Strengthened landing gear to allow for increases in weight during take-off and in the landing.
- Two new General Electric F414 engines offering 20% more power.

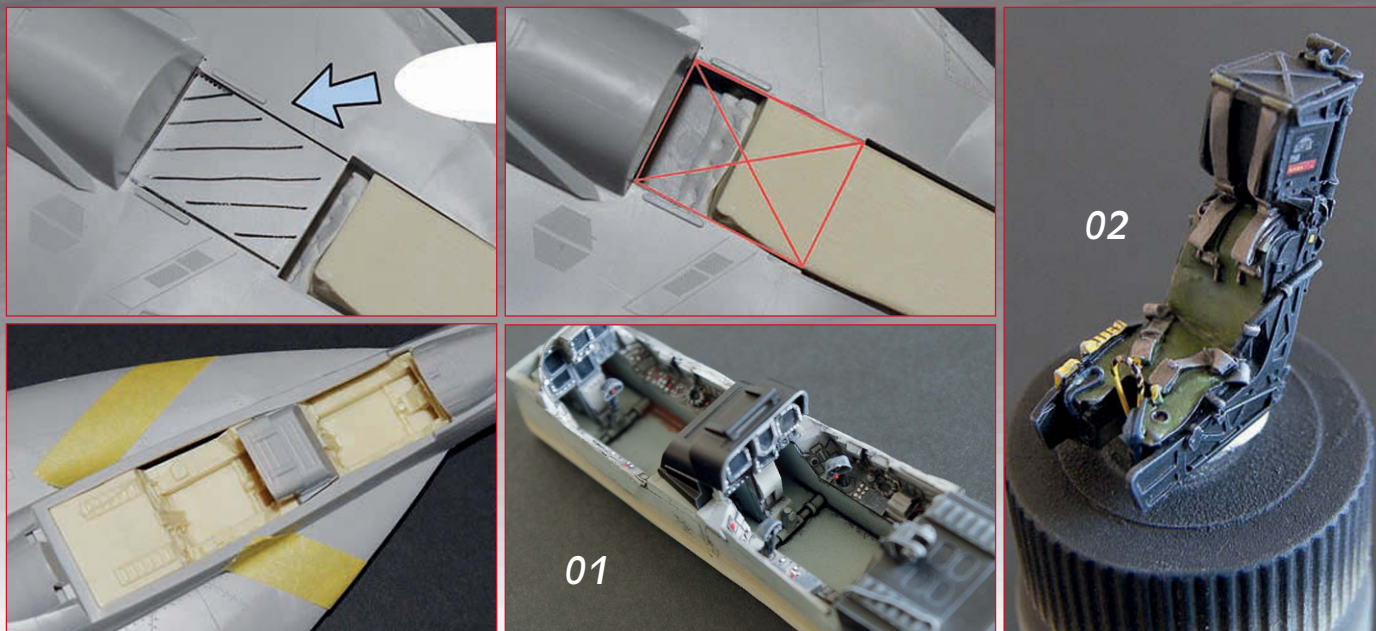
In September, 2010, the American orders for Super Hornet totalled about 700 aircraft. A specialized electronic warfare version, the EA-18G Growler, entered service in 2009; replacing the EA-6B Prowler. Renamed F/A-18E/F Boeing Super Hornet (F/A-18F for the two-seater version), the prototype of this version flew for the first time in November, 1995. Easily recognizable with its rectangular air inlets and not rounded off as on the first generation Hornet. The avionics are 90% common to those of the F/A-18C Hornet.

The cockpit was partially modified. In the block 2 production the US Navy planned a complete revision of the cockpit and the avionics of the Super Hornet, as the radar (APG-73) which, although modernized, is now twenty years old. Super Hornet has begun to be fitted with a new APG-79 radar with active antenna since 2007, and F/A-18 E and F delivered after 2004 will be retrofitted with it.

SUPER HORNET

Diamondbacks F/A-18F





The Cockpit

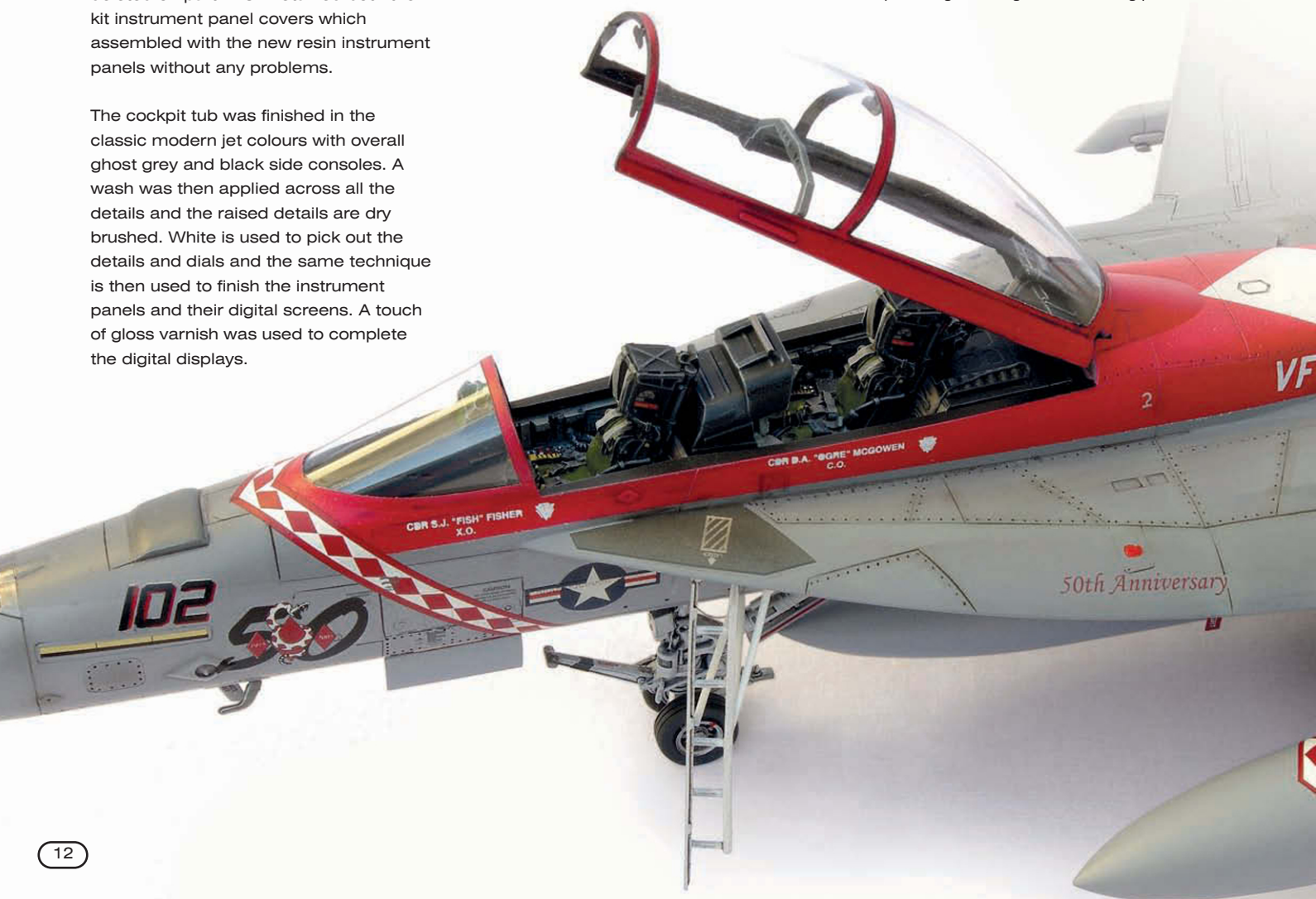
I used for my build a new Black Box resin cockpit reference CS48007, intended for the Revell kit. The cockpit only requires a little surgery to settle down correctly, and it fits remarkably well in the Hasegawa fuselage, only part C14 has to be slightly thinned, and a small area had to be deleted on part A23. I retained both the kit instrument panel covers which assembled with the new resin instrument panels without any problems.

The cockpit tub was finished in the classic modern jet colours with overall ghost grey and black side consoles. A wash was then applied across all the details and the raised details are dry brushed. White is used to pick out the details and dials and the same technique is then used to finish the instrument panels and their digital screens. A touch of gloss varnish was used to complete the digital displays.

The book 'Detail & Scale n°69' possesses all the required reference to bring all the details to life with excellent colour photos of the real cockpit and the ejector seats. The resin seats come with moulded seat belts so some delicate painting is all that is required here.

01 Contrary to what is recommended in the instructions of the model, I did not insert the cockpit between parts C12 and C5 at stage 2. Instead I glued it directly to part A3, which allowed the filling of any gaps as well as any engraving to be redone on the front of the fuselage.

02 The cushion is painted in olive green, harnesses in light grey; and the rest is in black matt. A fine brush was used to pick out all the smaller details amongst which are the ejection handles finished in yellow. I added the black stripes using a Rotring 0.1mm drawing pen.





Air Inlets

At this stage, the parts forming the air intakes are to be assembled, and it is a rather delicate stage of the build. Hasegawa supplies 2 part air intakes for the engines parts A18, A1). This is not ideal as a single piece would be more suitable without ejector pins marks and seam lines to clean up. Instead I opted for the superb replacement intakes in resin from Two Mikes Resin.

The set includes 4 parts, 2 intakes in white coloured resin, very fine and without bubbles and 2 turbine blades. Having deleted delicately carrots, conduits are painted in white Matt and a slightly darkened aspect is realized at the level of the turbine with some graphite.

The Fuselage

The rest of the assembly is almost routine, everything assembles very well, wings are on the other parts to be fitted before the assembly of both parts of the fuselage, and care needs to be taken to make certain that you have obtained the correct wing dihedral. On fitting the nose I noticed a gap to be about filled of about 1mm which I filled with an appropriate thickness of plastic card. To ensure a smooth flawless joint around the windscreen I used some Mr Surfacer 1000. The other problem area is situated between the two air intakes and so difficult to access. I manage to fill and clean it up before re-engraving the lost panel lines.

To protect the cockpit and to help when handling the model I temporarily fitted the canopies having pre-painted the cockpit

surrounds with matt black. The canopy parts were all carefully polished to remove any flaws and seam lines. I used several sandpapers of various grades from 1600 to 12000, taking care not to remove the frame details. To finish them, I polished using 'Tamiya Compound' for a crystal clear result.

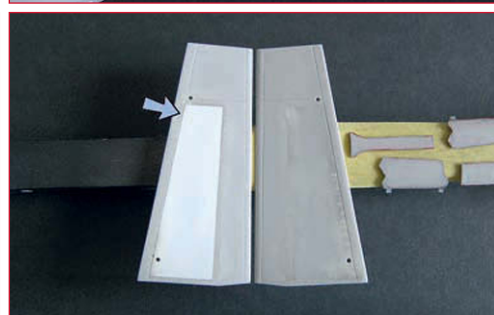
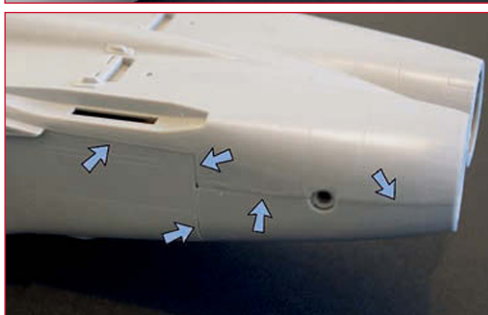
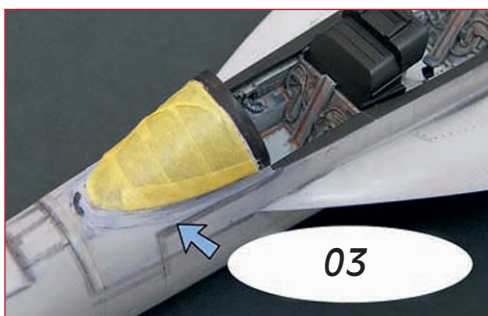
I decided not to cut the wings to have them folded, but the Hasegawa kit provides for this option, and instead I opted for dropped slats and flaps, this configuration is often seen on planes on the ground.

During the assembly of the main flaps, part B7 and B18, I noticed some sink marks which were corrected with putty and new plastic card panels.



03 I used some Mr Surfacer 500 to improve the joint between the fuselage and the windscreen. Delicate sanding was required to avoid damaging the clear parts which were protected with masking tape.

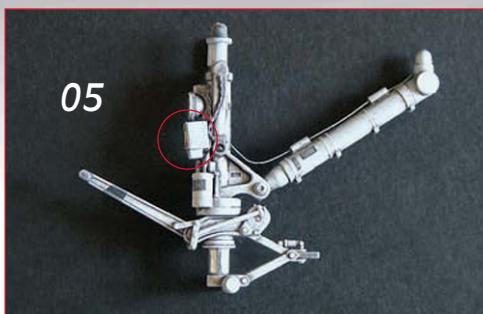
04 To mask the windows I used a guide to cut the perfect curvature available at www.jammydog.com



Landing Gear

The kit landing gear is well detailed, only some brake hoses are added using brass wire. The wheels were replaced with a superb set from Royal Resin, these are magnificent as expected from this brand. They were cleaned first with soapy water before the wheel rims were painted in white and the rubber in a slightly faded black.

To age slightly the wheel rims, I used the washes of CITADEL paints intended for their figurines ranges. I made a mix of 50% 'Badab Black' and 50% of 'Ogryn Flesh'. A dark black wash from MIG productions is selectively applied and after drying, they will be wiped over with a cotton bud soaked with white spirit, the landing gear of Super Hornet not being old enough to be too heavily weathered, so a subtle finish is more realistic and appropriate.



05 All the small indication plaque decals are affixed, even **3 small lights** and a coat of matt varnish is applied.



06

As regards to the armament of my 'Super Hornet', I was surprised to find that Hasegawa has included some missiles in the box. This is not common for them and normally we have to look around for alternative weapons. The plane is supplied with 2 AIM-9X Sidewinder and 2 AIM-120 Amraam. So the plane will be in classic configuration, 3 fuel tanks of 480 gallons each and 2 AIM-9X, I left two empty pylons and chose not to add the ASQ-228 Atflir Pod, As I did not want to break up the lines of the plane.

The Sidewinder is very well detailed for an injection moulded example, and only the fins had to be very slightly thinned at their extremities. The body of the missile

is a white and fins in gull grey darkened, the decals are from the kit and are sealed with matt varnish they make a beautiful reproduction of this new modern missile. I cut away the tip of the missile to add a resin protective cover from Airwaves. this was finished in bright yellow and an Eduard pre-painted 'Remove Before Flight' tag was added to finish it off.

Painting & Decoration

I chose a particular highly coloured livery used in celebration of 50 years of VFA-102 Diamondbacks based at Atsugi in Japan. Created in 1955, VF-102 first flew with the F2H Banshee, then F4D Skyray, F-4 Phantom and F-14 Tomcat in 1981 transferring to the Super Hornet. This particular scheme has been replicated with decals by TwoBobs ref. 48-105, but we shall see as I progressed that it had only limited use.

The Hornet itself carries a classic Navy 3 grey camouflage with FS 36320 for the top area, FS36375 for the bottom and FS35237 for trailing edges. Having cleaned the model with a little cotton and surgical spirit, I first used some matt black to check for any visible joints after sanding and to undercoat the glazing frames. The wheel bays were also pre-shaded with the black before the top coat of white was sprayed.



07 Once completely dry and checked of joints, I airbrushed a layer of matt white on the wells, over a base of black. The wheel wells were then masked before moving on with the rest of the painting.



08 I then attacked the painting has itself of the plane, 2 tones of grey, typical has the U.S Navy, in the first one I treated the bottom of the plane in FS 36375, using Prince August Air P050 to cover completely the bottom of the plane including the nose. The FS 36320 grey was then sprayed on the top surfaces taking care to mask the nose.



For this special VFA-102 diamondbacks scheme, the aircraft carries wide strips of red and diamonds in white on wings and elevators. Red diamonds on white strips wrap around the cockpit and fuel tanks. I had initially planned to use the sheet of decals by TwoBobs ref 48-105, but felt that they were quite thick and instead I decided to paint the main elements of the scheme myself.

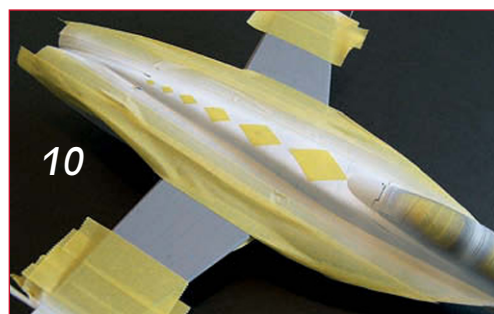


For wings and tail I used the decals as a template, which was a delicate stage because I had of course moved all the control surfaces on my model so there were multiple elements to be masked. Once the aircraft was correctly

masked, I airbrushed a layer of matt white paint to ensure a really bright red when this was sprayed on top. The paint was sprayed at a low pressure to avoid the paint cracking or peeling when the masks were removed.



09 It was important to find a good tone of red, the Gunze H327 was used. It works well to match the partially used elements from the decal sheet. I first masked the big dorsal zone completely with different sizes of masking tape.



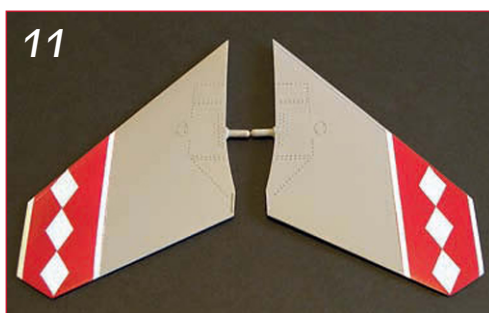
10 I then copied the size of the diamonds for the spine using the decals supplied as a size guide paying attention to the alignment and the spaces between each.



Then I applied the red Gunze, one coat is enough thanks to the white applied beforehand and once the paint is dry I had the pleasure of removing the masking tape.

I let the model dry for 48 hours for extra safety before applying a first coat of Tamiya satin varnish TS 79. I then airbrushed certain areas of the fuselage

and the wings with the same grey, but diluted by 50% with white in order to create a faded effect, although a modern aircraft, the Super Hornet is exposed to the sea air on its paint, and any small retouches would have been applied during routine maintenance. These effects are kept quite subtle however as this it is not another Tomcat.



11 The masking is removed to reveal pleasingly crisp paintwork.

12 The small '50' logo is supplied with the decals.

13 The nose strip had to be blended with the sprayed red areas.

I then applied the decals. I used the bare minimum from the decal sheet, the American stars were not retained. Fortunately Hasegawa decal sheet provided these along with some other elements. I had considerable problems with 2 big snake logos which despite considerable applications of decal solution crinkled and blistered and after drying I had to touch in some of the details with a fine brush, Fortunately once they were varnished they looked fine. After the boring placement of the decals I applied 2 coats of Tamiya matt varnish TS80.

After allowing 24 hours of drying time for the model, I began the weathering phase to dirty the model, bearing in mind that this is a special scheme so will not have the normal operational appearance, with the newly painted markings remaining relatively clean. I used MIG Productions 'Dark Wash' to pick out all the panel lines and rivet detail. The excess was then wiped away with a soft cloth dampened with white spirits working in the direction of the airflow. The effect is immediate and gives the plane a patina which I quite like although you can always apply another coat of varnish for a more uniform finish. You can also enhance selected areas by working over it again with another coat of wash.



The white strip with the registration '102' will also have to undergo numerous painting retouches.



The MIG Productions Dark Wash being applied to the panel lines.



We are finally going to be able to remove strips mask of the window and admire the result!



The engine nozzles could have been replaced with resin versions but painting the kit parts with Alclad Jet exhaust and an application of "Rub & Buff" shows that it is not necessary.



SUPER HORNET

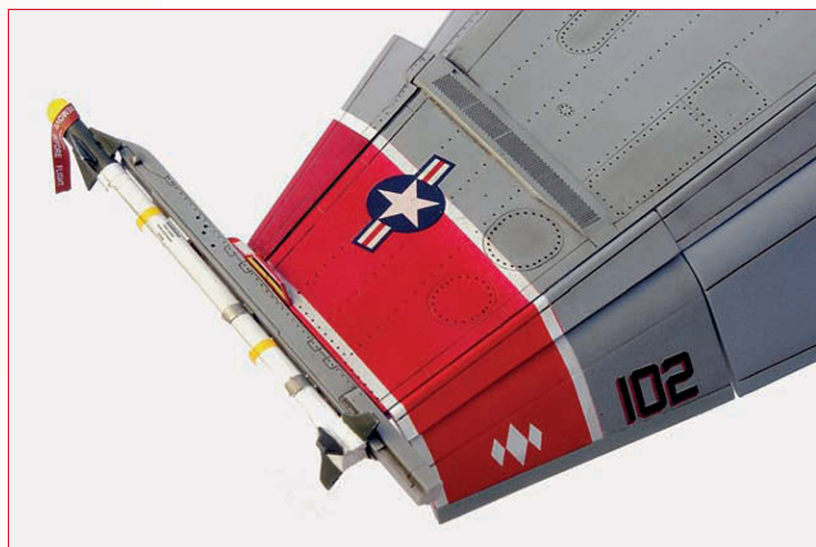
Diamondbacks F/A-18F





Conclusion

Fans of the Hornet will find much to admire in the Super Hornet too and for me it offers much more appeal than the F-35, which will replace it. Hasegawa handle modern jets with considerable skill and the kit is superb and when teamed with this high impact scheme it makes for a thoroughly rewarding project.



Paolo Portuesi test flies Meng's ME410

This is Meng's first 1:48 scale release and they are to be commended for their choice of subject. Not an easy subject and that complex canopy could be make or break so we asked Paolo to see just how it all preformed.

The instruction booklet is very impressive, very well done. The instructions are one of the strengths of this kit. Painting guidelines are very well done, but they are given only for the Gunze Colours. Decals are provided by Cartograf. Thin and in perfect register, they are as good as any aftermarket decal sheet. Seat belts, and some other details, are offered in a small photo etched sheet. The breakdown of the parts looks very logical and there's options abound. Meng's Me 410 allows the modeller to build the B-2/U4 version right from the kit.

The Me 410 was a German airplane used by the Luftwaffe during the Second World War. This aircraft was first planned as a possible heir to the Bf 110, but the aircraft showed marked instability in flight, and attempts to remedy this resulted in a very long development process and a large number of changes to the original design. Powered by the DB 603A and known as the Hornisse, the 410 entered production late in 1942. By 1944 a total of one thousand one hundred and sixty had been manufactured. A number of sub-types were produced, with equipment or armament differences. The Me 410 was used as a fighter, bomber destroyer and reconnaissance. The Me 410 B-2/U4 was equipped with a powerful 50 mm cannon, and it was optimized to fight against the Allied bombers.





1:48 Scale *Meng Models*

At first glance the kit seems somewhat over-engineered, but that is not really the case. Parts for two pretty well done engines are included, and that is very good because usually you get only one. Detail goes as far as moulding technology can go in this scale. As a result, there is almost no room for further improvement. A multi-part very thin canopy gives plenty of possibilities to show an impressive cockpit. Again, there is no reason for any etched or resin cockpit replacement. In addition to the two engines, five well engineered and detailed machine guns and cannons are screaming for open access panels. All movable surfaces can be positioned. Panel lines are restrained. Overall accuracy is good but tail, engine oil coolers, propellers and spinners are perhaps problematic.



Stage 01 Construction

I began construction from the cockpit. The cockpit was assembled pretty much stock, including kit's photo etch belts. The entire fuselage interior was painted in RLM 66, given a dark oil wash and dry brushed. Hard to believe this is a standard kit cockpit!



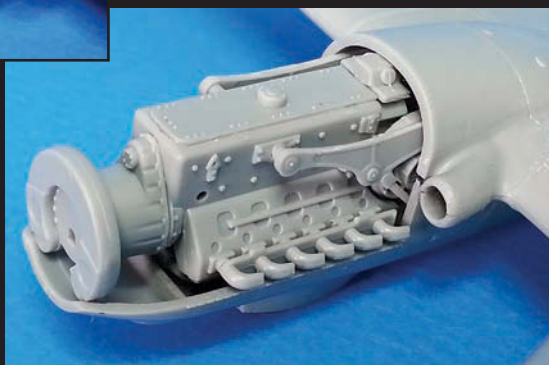
The cockpit is adequately detailed, with raised detail which makes dry brushing very effective. Good painting and some washes make every tiny detail stand out, but much of it is invisible after joining together the two fuselages halves.

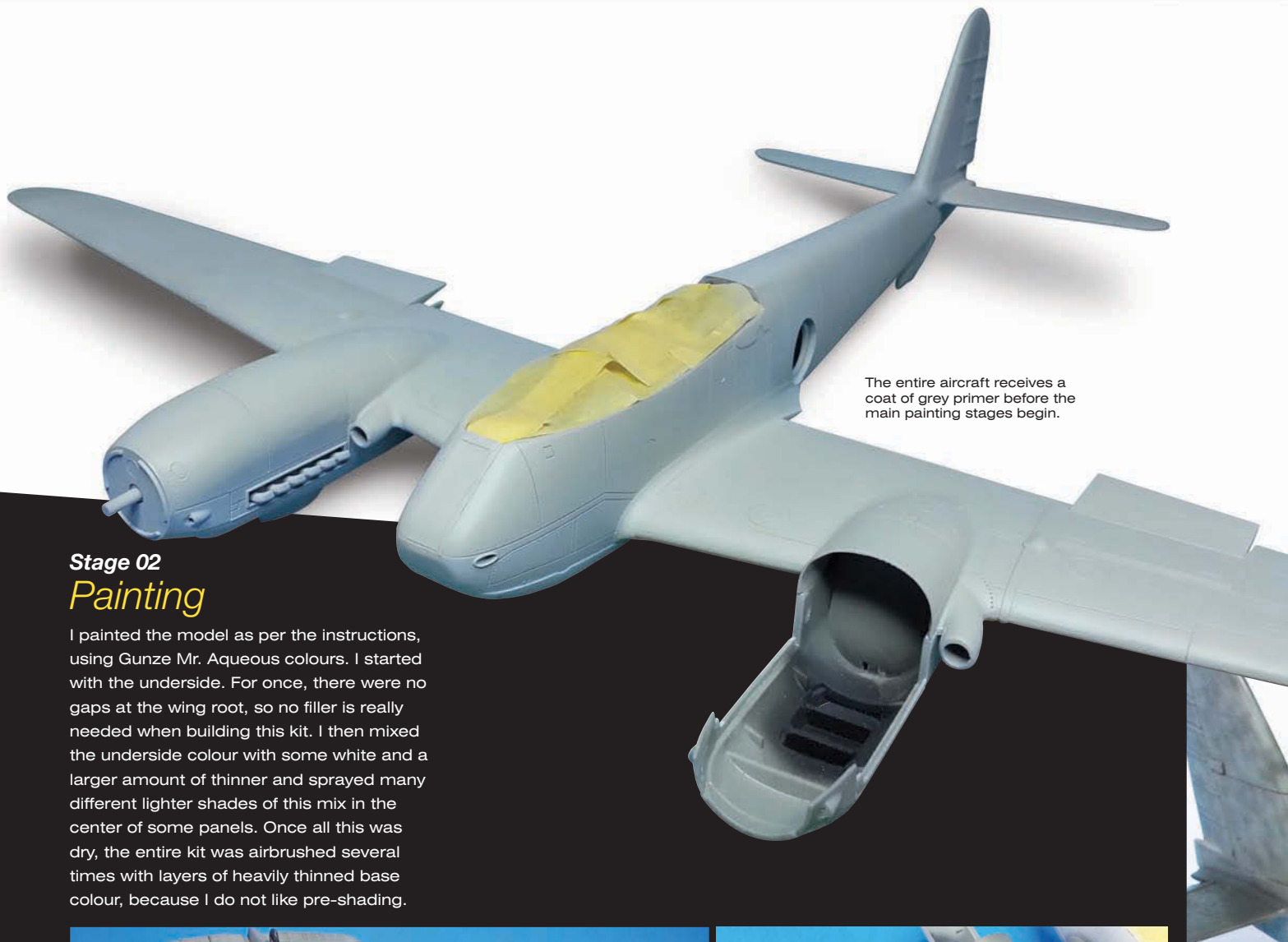


Cannons were painted acrylic Black, and then dry brushed with an enamel Aluminium. Unless you leave the bay open, almost nothing is visible once the model is finished, but if you want to take things further this is an excellent start.



While I decided to leave all the weapon access panels closed, I wanted to build my kit leaving an engine visible. The only change that I feel compelled to do was thinning the edges of the wing.





The entire aircraft receives a coat of grey primer before the main painting stages begin.

Stage 02 *Painting*

I painted the model as per the instructions, using Gunze Mr. Aqueous colours. I started with the underside. For once, there were no gaps at the wing root, so no filler is really needed when building this kit. I then mixed the underside colour with some white and a larger amount of thinner and sprayed many different lighter shades of this mix in the center of some panels. Once all this was dry, the entire kit was airbrushed several times with layers of heavily thinned base colour, because I do not like pre-shading.



At this point, the upper surfaces were sprayed in with the two camouflage colours. The splinter was done freehand. I like to get a soft edge between colours. I mark the camouflage pattern with a pencil and then to fill all up spraying from a very close distance. After a long painting session, weathering was done with artist's oils.





Stage 03
Final Touches



Above The main gear legs were detailed with some thin lead cable.

Below Kit propellers and spinners were replaced with the more accurate resin ones released by Vector.



An invisible thread antenna aerial was added and insulators were made from small drops of white glue. Mating the canopy with the fuselage was one of my concerns, but it proved to be problem free with all the parts fitting well!





There were no problems during the construction of this kit. I had a lot of fun and almost no problems in building the Me 410. Honestly, the most difficult part in this project was writing this article, because I had very little to say as it all performed so well. My only advice would be to leave aside the massive cannon barrel until the very end of the build.

Paolo Portuesi's *Messerschmitt*
ME410



One of the more significant aircraft manufactured during the Second World War by the Germans, the FW-200 Condor is a really elegant beauty.

I must admit I've always been fascinated by this four-engined former passenger aircraft adapted to become a bomber and long range maritime patrol aircraft for the Luftwaffe. It proved a success in the maritime patrol role and Winston Churchill dubbed them "the scourge of the Atlantic", serving as the eyes of the German submarine fleet, relaying of the positions of the allied convoys.

The Kit

I remember that for many years, modellers were hoping for a modern replacement for the old and outdated 1:72 Revell model and the complicated and expensive Costner 1:48 vacform model. It was Trumpeter who undertook this task in 1:48, although from my point of view, not entirely successfully, since the model has many deficiencies, and inaccuracies so I had to work hard to reach an acceptable outcome.

The 'cons' that I found were:

- Soft Plastic and very low density (a classic Trumpeter).
- Total lack of internal structure in the fuselage (Ribs and frames).
- Gaps around the internal bulkheads.
- Gun turret simplified and totally incorrect and the simple engines were replaced with Vector aftermarket parts.

- Absence of the fabric wing surfaces of the original aircraft.
- Wheels Wells without any details.
- Surface detail on the movable control surfaces, totally out of scale.
- Flaps very simple had to be replaced by photoetched versions.

The 'pros' of the model are:

- It is the only affordable 1:48 version.
- Did I say that I really wanted to do a Condor 1:48?.

I could see that I would have a lot of homework to do and above all I would need very good references, and although the web has many photos, they did not give me everything I needed so I bought several dedicated books on the subject, and also I had the invaluable collaboration of my friend Juan Carlos Salgado, author of two volumes devoted to the Condor (Editorial Alcañiz Fresno), and a magnificent book (The Airliner That Went to War). Armed with this I began to work on the model.



FW-200 C-4

CONDOR

'THE SCOURGE OF THE ATLANTIC'

1943 BORDEAUX 8/KG-40

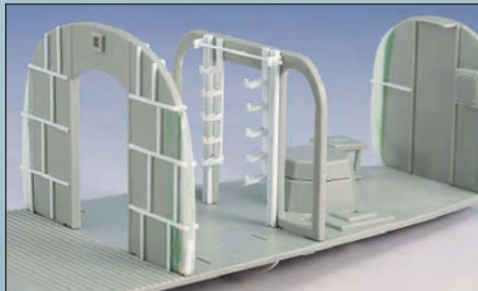
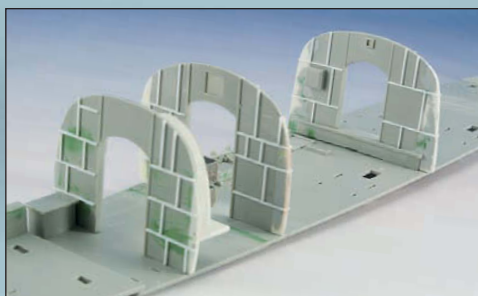
by

TOMAS DE LA FUENTE



Assembly

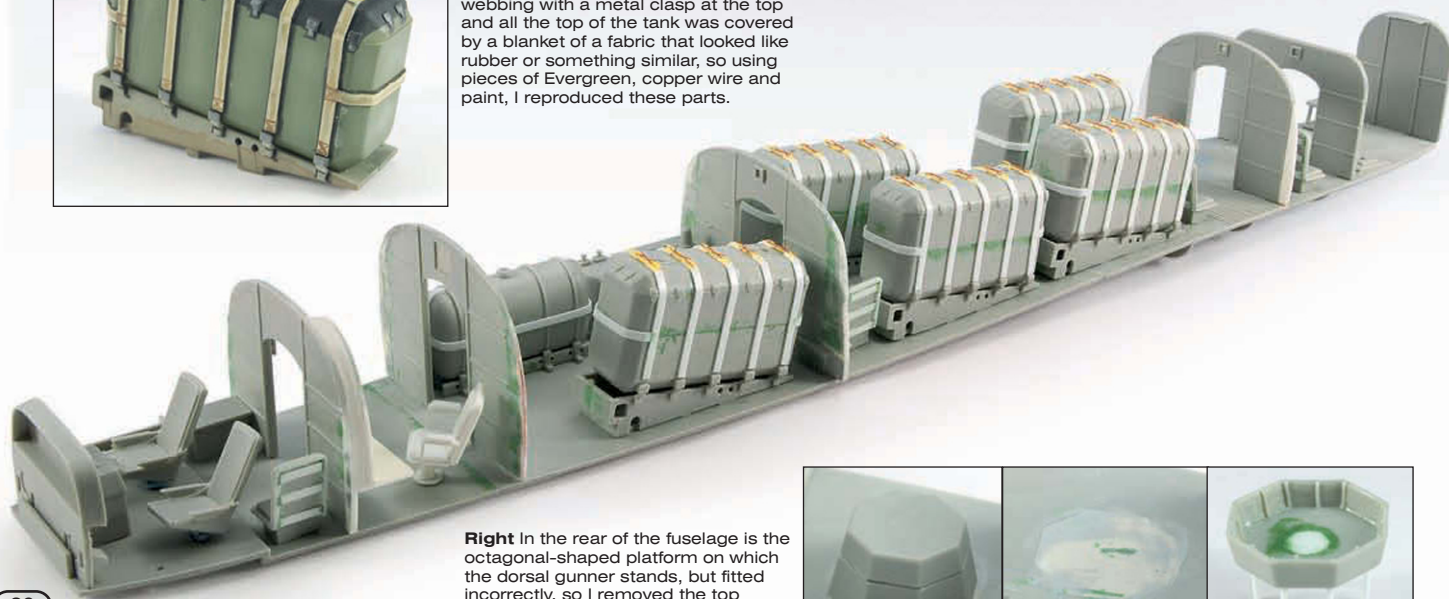
As usual I started to work on the interior, first placing the bulkheads separating the aircraft's different compartments, I found these did not fit flush to the insides of the fuselage, so I had to make filler pieces to bridge the gaps. I also had to rebuild all the ribs that appear on the bulkheads as well as opening some areas of the rear bulkhead and adding the supports for the ammo/weapons. Based on photos of the interior, I began to add all the interior ribbing and frames, using several types of Evergreen profile. This task was especially tedious but the end result is a real improvement and has radically changed the look of the interior. Then I started to list all the items inside the fuselage, starting with a fuel transfer pump, which was a parallelepiped with actuators on top. This was made from telephone wire with the sheath peeled away on one side, and a stretched piece of clear plastic. This was painted yellow, and I added a reduced copy of the original plan of the fuel system.



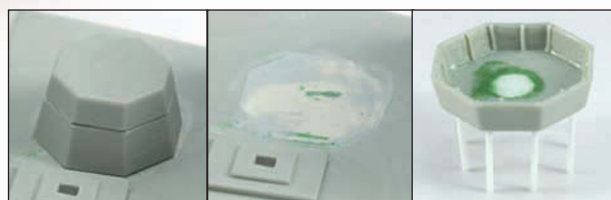
Above The rounded oil tanks also needed work, to reproduce the fastening straps, which I did again with Evergreen strips.

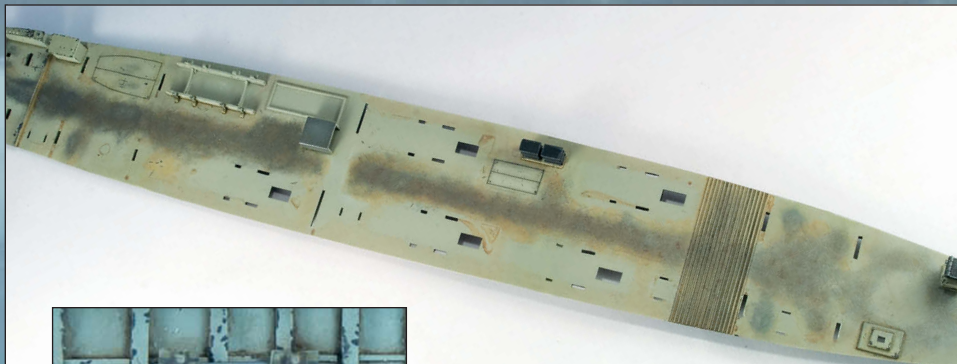
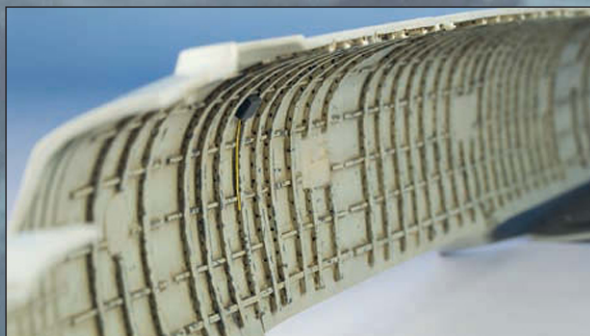
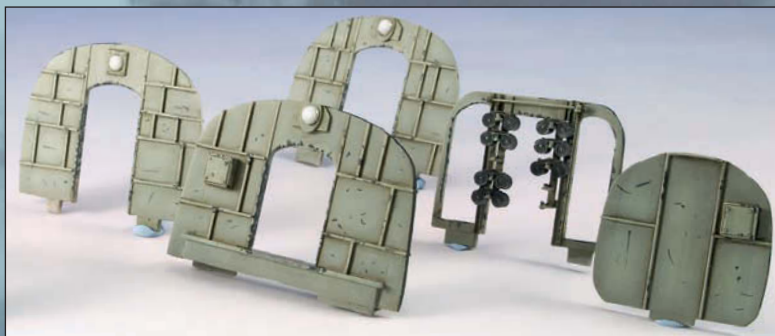


Left The fuselage fuel tanks also required some work. They were secured by webbing with a metal clasp at the top and all the top of the tank was covered by a blanket of a fabric that looked like rubber or something similar, so using pieces of Evergreen, copper wire and paint, I reproduced these parts.



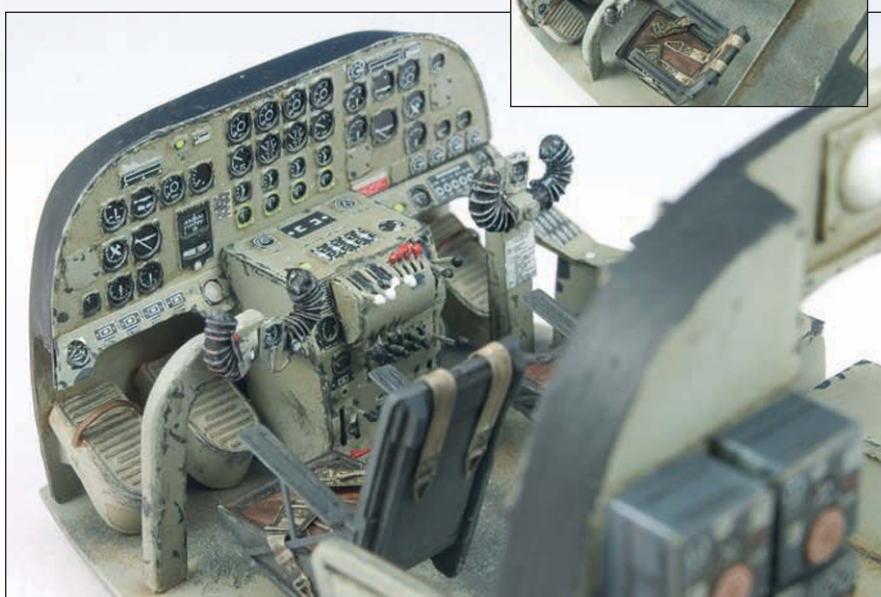
Right In the rear of the fuselage is the octagonal-shaped platform on which the dorsal gunner stands, but fitted incorrectly, so I removed the top section and filled the hole, I flipped the removed section and I added a grab bar as on the real aircraft.



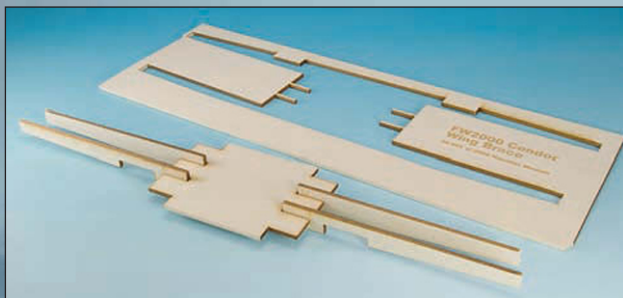


I proceeded to paint the entire interior with the standard colour of the Luftwaffe, RLM 02 (Gunze H-70), using highlights where necessary, of the base colour mixed with some white (Gunze H-11). I dry brushed with Tamiya Gun Metal (X-10), on the floor in the walkways of the crew, to imitate worn areas of continual use. This was then followed by some dust and dirt accumulated by the crew.

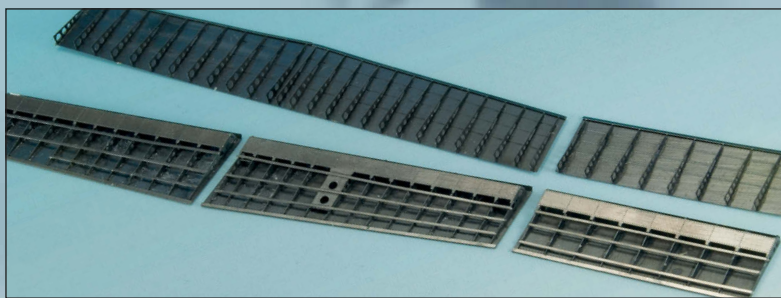
I then applied scratches and chipped paint on all areas inside the fuselage that would have been worn by the actions of the crew, this I did with a brush using 995 of Vallejo German Grey. Next, I placed the various etched details including the instrument panels, seat belts, radio plates, as well as some scratchbuilt curtains made with tin foil for each window. This completes the assembly phase of the fuselage and the two halves can be joined.



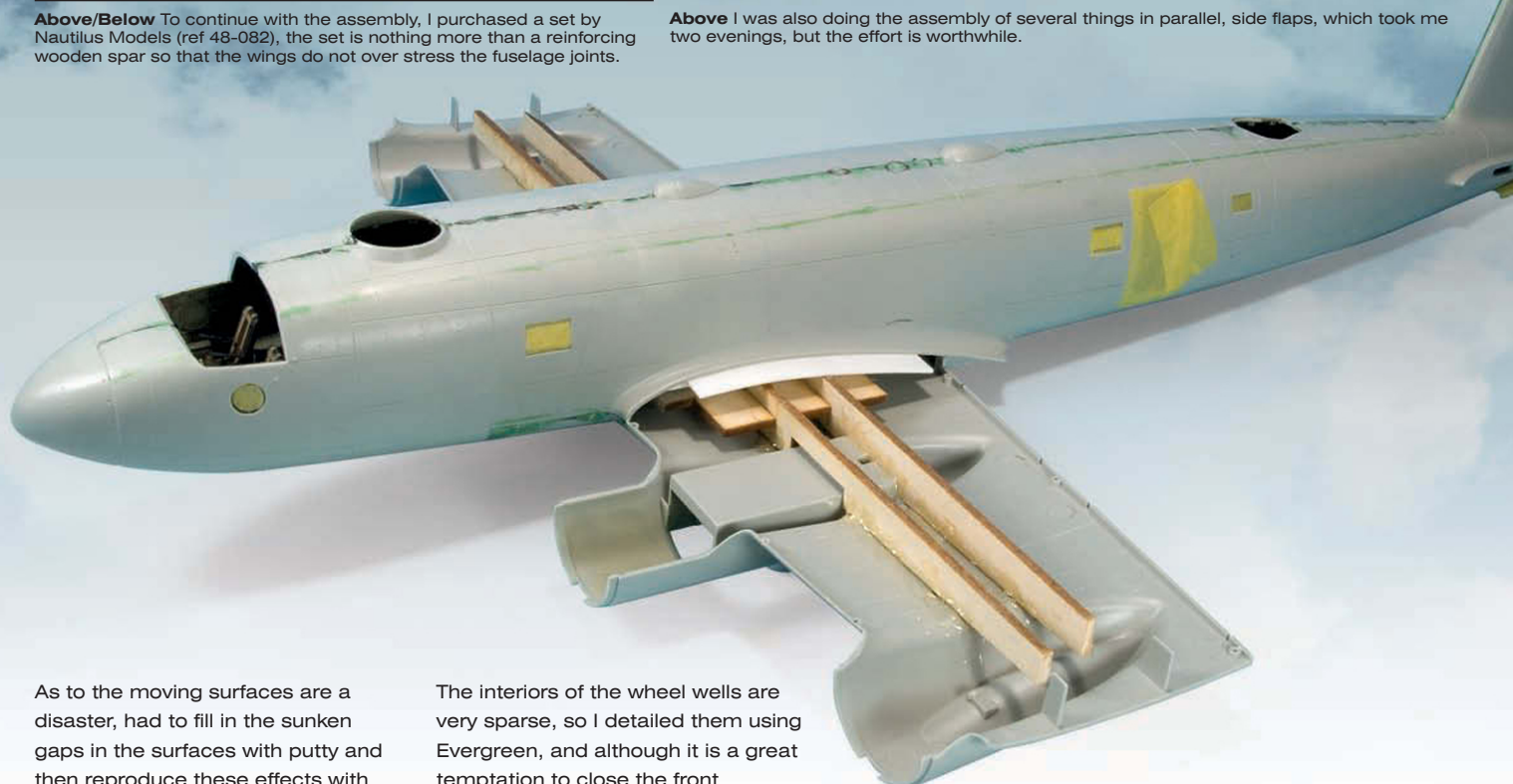
Above I also scratchbuilt the radio operator's seat because the model does not supply it.



Above/Below To continue with the assembly, I purchased a set by Nautilus Models (ref 48-082), the set is nothing more than a reinforcing wooden spar so that the wings do not over stress the fuselage joints.



Above I was also doing the assembly of several things in parallel, side flaps, which took me two evenings, but the effort is worthwhile.



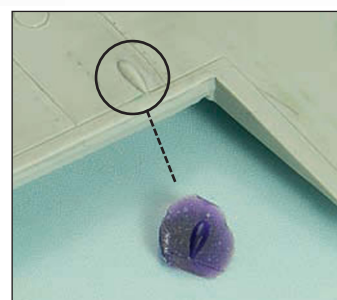
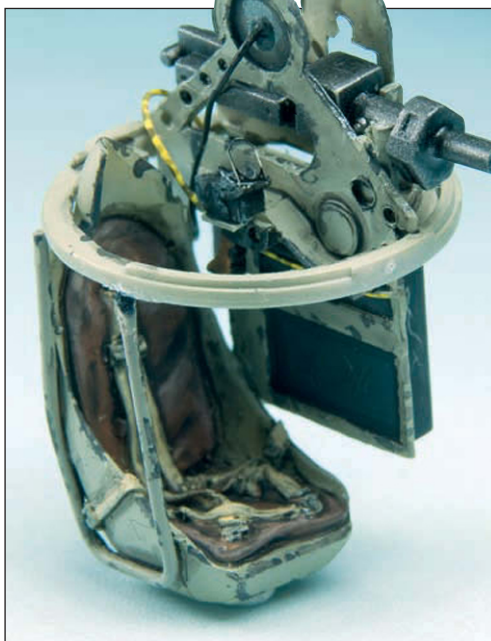
As to the moving surfaces are a disaster, had to fill in the sunken gaps in the surfaces with putty and then reproduce these effects with paint. On the wings I had to remove the rivets which I did with superglue and sanding, and I had to rescribe many panel lines and rivets on the wings and fuselage, since most were lost during the sanding.

The interiors of the wheel wells are very sparse, so I detailed them using Evergreen, and although it is a great temptation to close the front bulkhead of the wells, I did not, because that is where the wheels sit when retracted.

Below As I said earlier, the gun turret is very simplified and inaccurate, so I made a new one from scratch and with spare parts.



Far Right The engines supplied with the kit are very simple, so I replaced it with Vector ones in resin, the result is magnificent, although it was rather laborious process of making four. Once assembled I proceeded to put the push rods with Evergreen rod, and spark plug wires with copper wire. The engines are painted with various metallic colours from Alclad. Then I applied a wash over them with Dark Wash from MIG Productions, to enhance all the details.



Right I had to move several teardrop shaped lumps that were misplaced, so I made a simple mould to copy them in resin.





Above To mask the clear parts I used a combination of Montex masks, along with Eduard.



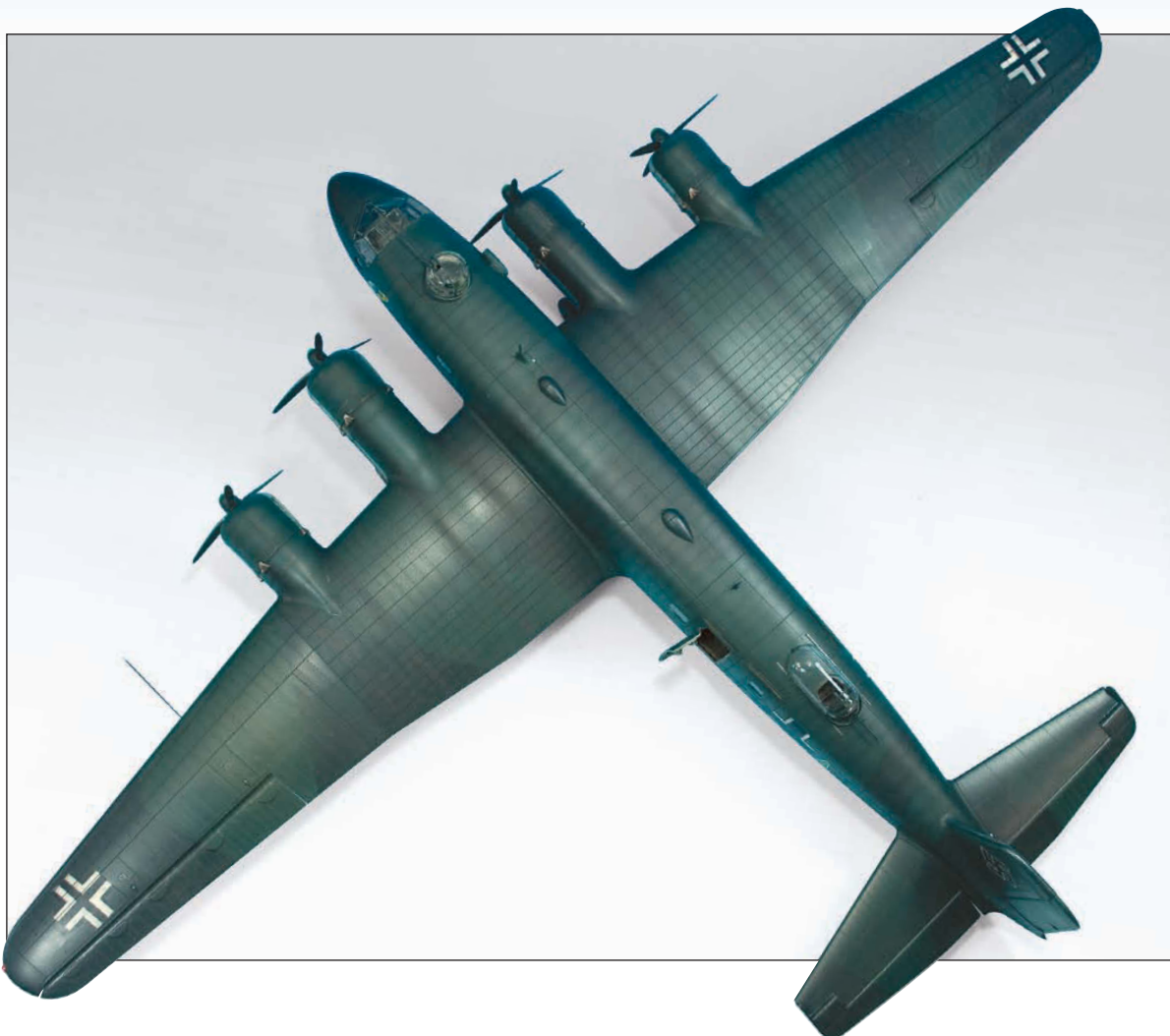
Above I started to improve the ventral gondola, adding partitions flooring from scratch and I also added a 20mm cannon and ammunition feed chute.

Painting

After checking all the literature at my disposal, as well as numerous photos on the internet I realized that for the model C-4, potential paint schemes were limited exclusively to the typical splinter scheme for naval aircraft of the Luftwaffe, consisting of RLM 72 and 73, and the lower surfaces in RLM 65. I actually found a striking pattern in a photograph of where the fuselage was mottled in RLM 65, but it proved to be a C-8, with considerable differences with my model C-4. My friend Juan Carlos confirmed that I should stick to the aforementioned splinter camouflage as there was no evidence that there had been any other scheme for this version. Furthermore, this scheme had the handicap that the colours were very dark with low contrast between

them and this effect was accentuated with operational wear, meaning that in some period photos look like the aircraft were painted in one colour.

The next point to address was what type of paint to use. From my personal experience, I knew that Xtracolor enamel offers a good colour match but did not want to work with enamels. I was reluctant to use the Xtracrylix acrylic alternatives as I had experienced problems with them peeling off when masks were removed. The alternative of mixing my own shades from Tamiya colours did not appeal either so in the end I reverted to the Xtracrylix acrylic colours to spray the top surface splinter pattern.

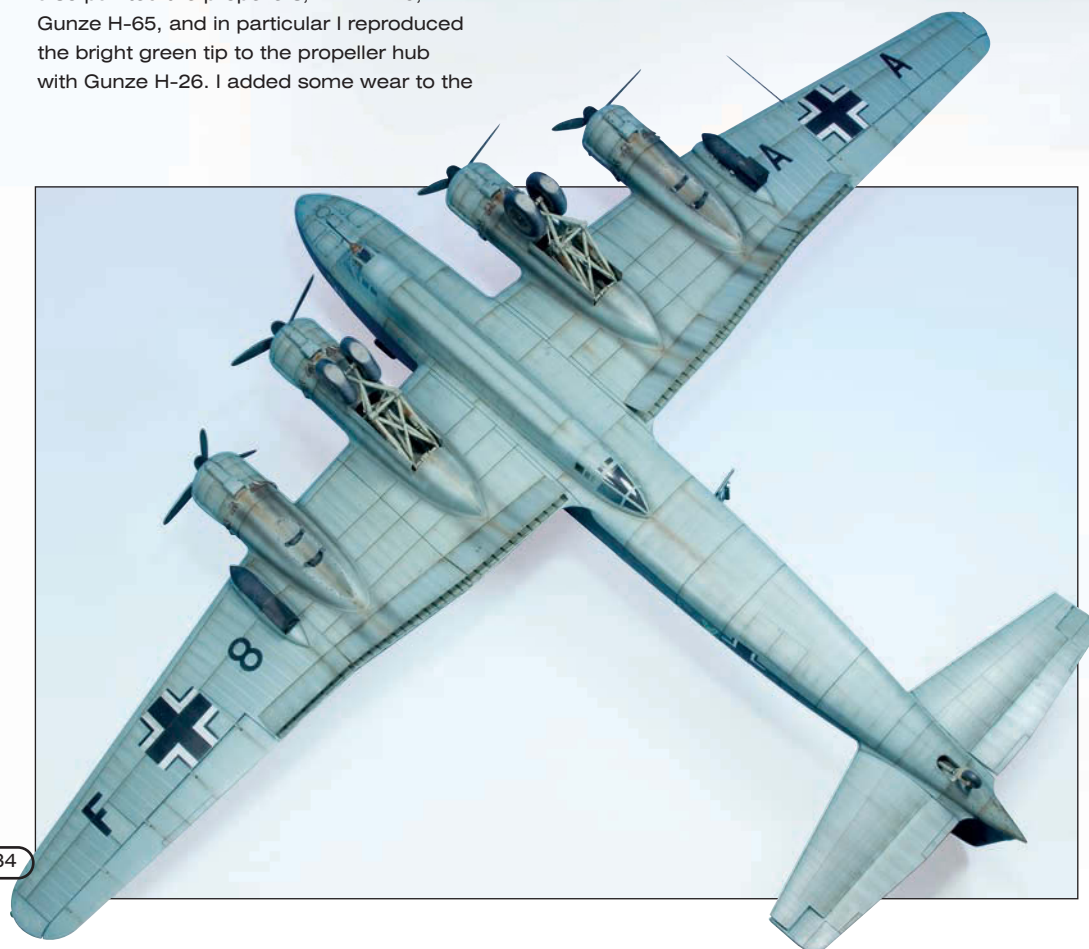


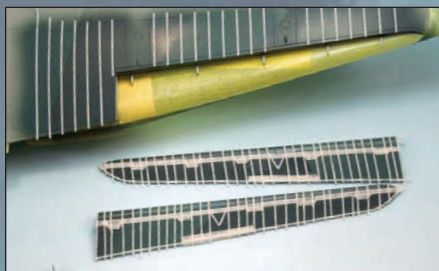


For painting I divided the work into two parts, top and bottom and I decided to start with the bottom, which received a blue uniform coat of RLM 65 Gunze H-67, with the same colour lightened with some white was used to paint those areas that were fabric-covered on the wings. The same tone, but very diluted to 10% was airbrushed over the lines of rivets to define them. I also painted at this time the crosses and the code letters for the aircraft, using Montex masks. I also applied masks to create the areas of ribbing below the fabric areas, using thin strips of masking tape, before airbrushing a layer of the previously airbrushed colour slightly darkened with a drop of XF-1 black (very diluted) to slightly shade between the ribs. I also painted the propellers, in RLM 70, Gunze H-65, and in particular I reproduced the bright green tip to the propeller hub with Gunze H-26. I added some wear to the

propeller blades by rubbing graphite on them, to give a sense of use, but not too extreme as I do not like the propellers too worn. I primed the flaps, with Mr Base White 1000, to be sure that the paint takes hold correctly. The elevators were given the same treatment as fabric-covered surfaces of the wings, except that in the end I applied a filter with the original colour very dissolved, so I managed to unify them and eliminate any excessive contrast.

The internal areas of the flaps which were then fixed to the wing were painted RLM 02 Gunze H-70, and received a wash with the MIG Productions Dark Wash, to help define all the rib details. This completed the work on the undersides.





With respect to the top, I must say I started in the fabric areas and moving surfaces. These I painted in RLM 72 and 73, Xtracrylix XA1222 and XA1223 respectively. Then as with the undersides i masked the rib details with strips of tape again. A darker tone was used to shade the recesses leaving the raised ribs in the original colours. Removing the strips of tape gave me the same problems again with the paint lifting off. I had no choice but to repeat the whole process. Eventually I got a good result but not without much cursing.



For the rest of the scheme I used low tack paper to mask and I avoided any problems with lifting paint. I used lighter tones again to highlight the panels but kept this quite restrained to avoid anything too contrasty. Then I painted the crosses and other markings using Montex masks. I also painted the bombs in matt black shaded with XF-1 and worn effects made with MIG pigments.



Once I was satisfied that the model was entirely dry I proceeded to airbrush along the panels lines running streaks of dirt in the direction of the airflow. I did this by covering the edges of the panel lines and airbrushing with very diluted matt brown Tamiya XF -10. Having done all this I proceeded to paint stains from engine exhausts and for this first painted a very diluted light grey Tamiya XF-80. Once completely dry I painted the center of the exhaust stains in matt black XF -1, also very diluted and applied in successive thin layers in order to have more control over the final effect obtained. I also added dirt trails, flowing from the oil radiators under the engine done by airbrushing a mixture made of,

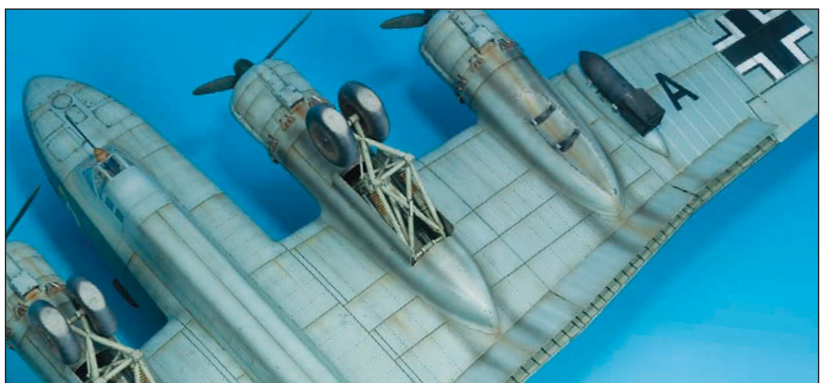
XF-10, XF-52 and XF-49, again this was applied very diluted in several layers. I also added various chips and scratches in the painting, using a brush to add touches here and there with of Vallejo German Grey.

After all this I airbrushed several coats of Future before enhancing paneling and rivets, using MIG Productions Dark Wash, letting it penetrate along all the panel lines and rivets, and let it dry very well. After that I cleaned away any excess using a dry, clean cloth with thinners and always working in the direction of the air flow. As the surface was very smooth and shiny, thanks to the Future, the oil wash was easily wiped away leaving the panel lines and rivet detail nicely defined.



In parallel I worked on the turrets with the rear dorsal turret I had to completely scratchbuild, with pieces from here and there, to get a satisfactory result. The landing gear actuators had added wiring and hydraulic braking and as usual were painted RLM

02 Gunze H-70, with silver accents on the hydraulic cylinders. Then I glued all the remaining loose pieces and added the rigging, so completing the assembly of the FW-200 Condor, after a little over two years working on it intermittently.





Dedication

I would like to dedicate this aircraft to people who have helped me. These individuals were: Alex Sanchez, Daniel Zamarbide, Jose Luis Fauste, Jose Antonio Granado and Juan Carlos Salgado and of course my wife and my children, for always being there.

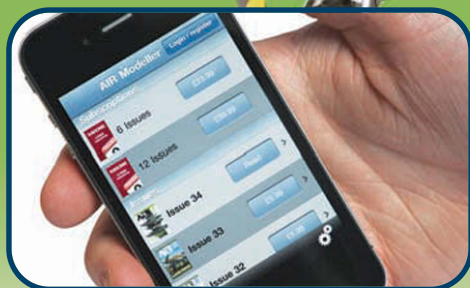


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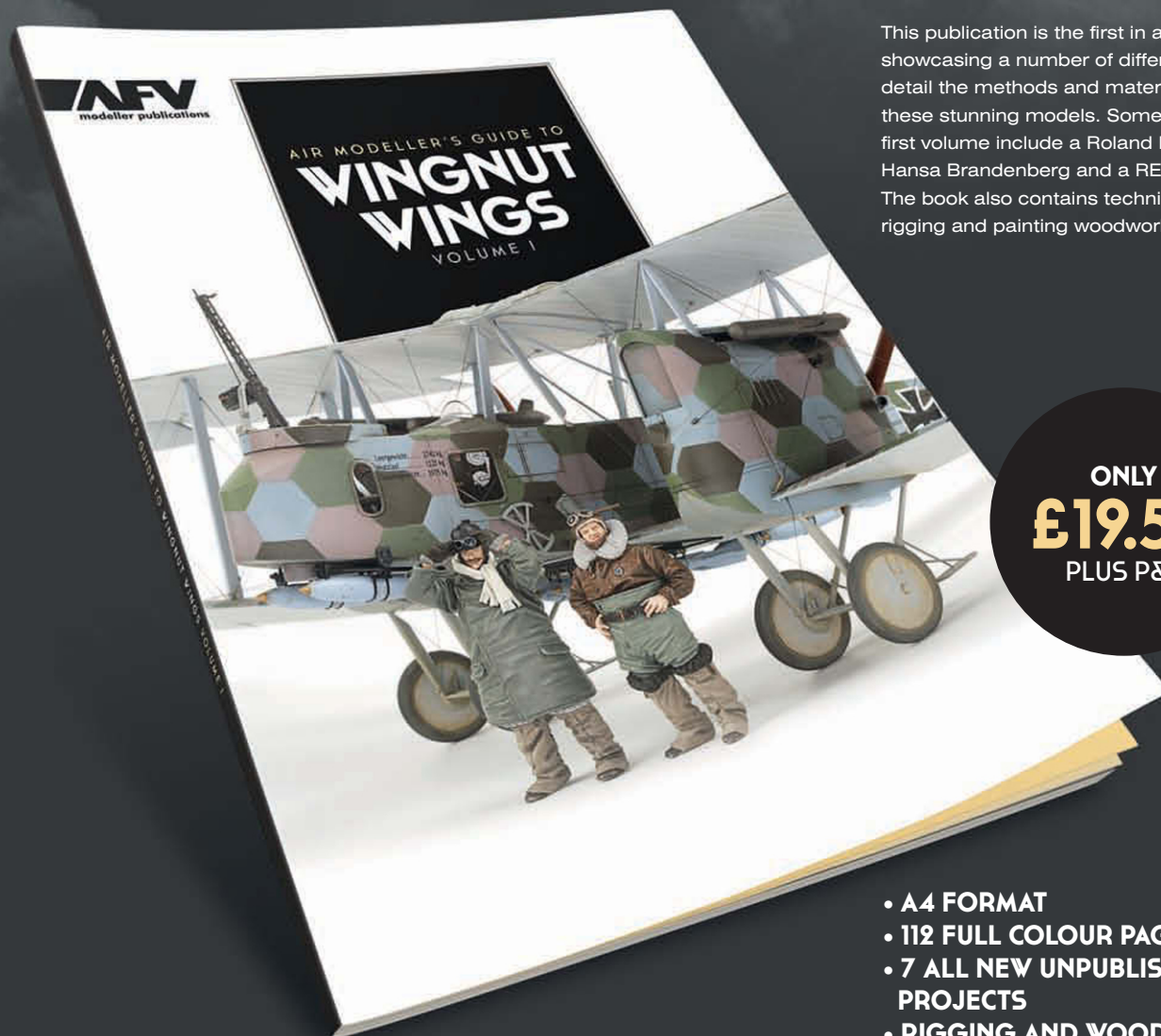
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A promising Navy fighter whose early years were blighted by its infamous J40 engine was the McDonnell F3H Demon first flown on 7 August 1951. Subject to a Navy imposed mission-shift and a less than optimum engine replacement, the first production F3H-2s entered service with VF-14 on 7 March 1956. 519 Demons were produced, including prototypes, although only 461 entered service. Always underpowered, the Demon was withdrawn from service in August 1964. (McDonnell)

US NAVY AIRCRAFT, THEIR LIVERIES AND MARKINGS

PART FOUR

BY HUGH W. COWIN

From Korea and Vietnam to the Cost-Above-All Years, June 1952 – March 1985

The Navy probably benefitted more from their part in the Korean conflict than did the Air Force. Carrier-borne air power proved more resilient than their land-based colleagues in conditions where vast tracts of territory changed hands with astonishing rapidity.

Thus, in the early 1950s, funding fortunes started to swing the Navy's way, perhaps best seen in the go-ahead to build the new, big 59,000 ton carrier, USS Forrester. This was also the time of innovative aircraft design thinking. Contracts went out to industry for a raft of prototypes, ranging from the Convair and Lockheed 'Pogo-planes' turboprop take-off and landing fighters, to Martin and their near Mach One at low-level Seamaster.

This period of relative prosperity was to last through the late 1950s. It was also an era in which technological advances saw new missions such as Airborne Early Warning (AEW) emerged –all requiring

additional funds. A political reaction was inevitable, soon to be driven by one particularly intrusive politician. This man was Robert McNamara, Secretary for Defense for most of the 1960s, whose bean-counting stamp was to be felt by both Navy and Air Force throughout the next decade. McNamara, former head of the World Bank, strove to instill the virtues of commonality and mission multiplicity on all within his broad domain. His earliest influence was felt over the Navy's F4H-1 Phantom II, first flown in May 1958. At his insistence, the F4H was to be adopted by the Air Force, whether they liked it or not. As the Phantom II largely lived up to its early promises few outside the Air Force 'Top Brass' complained. Not so with McNamara's later demand that the Navy adopt the Air Force's swing-wing General Dynamics F-111. This led to the aborted GD-Grumman F-111B, arguably setting back the debut of Grumman's own F-14 Tomcat by several years. McNamara's last legacy was to introduce the concept of high-low cost fighter mixes. Here, he argued, neither the Navy or the Air Force

could afford to buy the planned numbers of expensive F-14 Tomcats and F-15 Eagles, so the shortfall in quality would be made up by procuring a proportionally greater quantity of cheaper, less capable fighters.

Thus, during the 1970s, both the Navy and Air Force found themselves operating just such mixed fighter fleets, comprised of Navy F-14s and F/A-18s, along with the Air Force's F-14s and F-16s.

The big event as far as Navy and Marine aircraft markings and finish were concerned occurred in March 1955, when the use of overall midnight blue finish for all front-line aircraft was to be dropped in favour of light grey upper and anti-radiation white applied to all lower surfaces. One other marking innovation to come about in this period was the introduction of the Modex Number. This system applies specifically to aircraft maintenance and, these days, is totally divorced from the aircraft's BuAer No. It takes the form of a three-digit group worn on the nose and repeated on the fin top and outer wing panels.



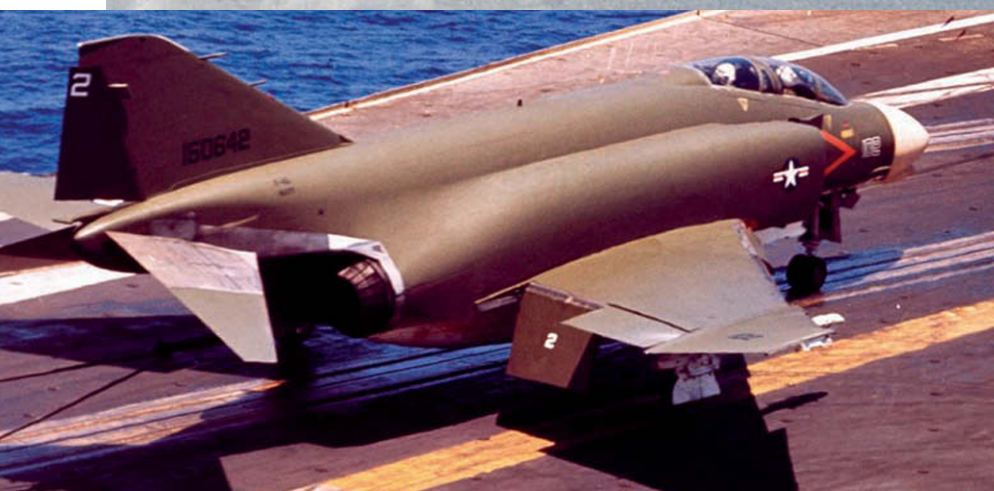
Left In an endeavour to free themselves from vulnerable slow-moving carrier or fixed-base ground fighter control systems, both the Navy and Air Force took to the skies in the 1950s with such aircraft as the Lockheed WV-2L Warning Star seen here. Airborne Early Warning (AEW) brought another bonus by extending the radar reach. Both the WV-2 and the Air Force's EC-121 were modified Lockheed Super Constellations. Including two earlier WV-1 Constellations, the Navy bought 152 WVs operated by nine squadrons from 1954, covering both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The last WV unit retired at the end March 1979. (US Navy)



Left Revealing something of the problems faced by the Navy in keeping up with fighter developments in the late 1940s was their need to order a navalised version of North American's F-86 Sabre. First flown on 27 December 1951, the production machines were FJ-2s, FJ-3 and FJ-4s, all named Fury, of which 1,112 were built. The FJ-3 seen here belonged to GMGRU-1, a drone-control trials unit. (US Navy)

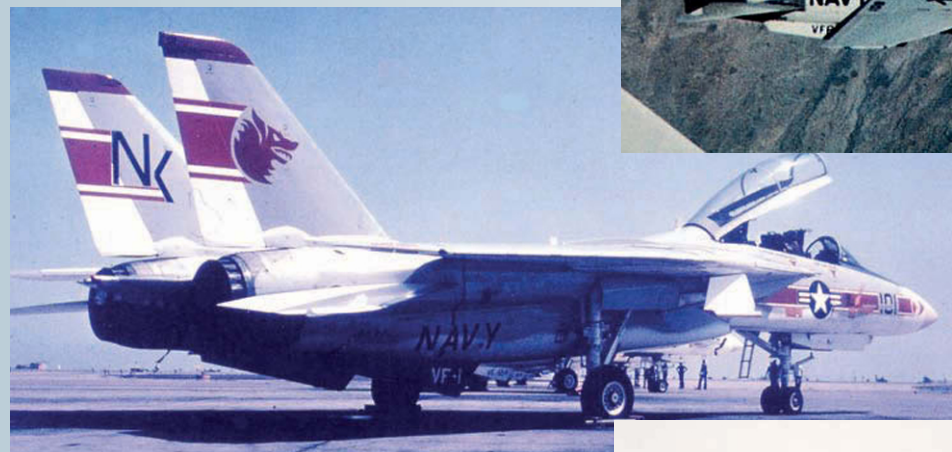


Big, ugly but powerful, McDonnell's F-4 Phantom served with both Navy and Marine squadrons over a 32-year period, from 1960 to 1992. During this time, its multiplicity of roles, ranging from fighter, through photo-reconnaissance to bomb-hauler -carrying heavier warloads than the Consolidated PB4Y-1 Liberator of World War II. First flown on 27 May 1958, F-4 Phantom production totalled 5,195 machines, including 127 Japanese-built examples. The initial production F4H-1s, as they were then known, entered service on 30 December 1960, with VF-121. The last front-line F-4 retired in December 1989. However, one Marine reserve unit, VMFA-112 continued flying F-4s until 18 January 1992.



Also adopted by the US Air Force and later by other many nations, the type remains operational in Germany, Greece and Turkey. The F-4B seen retaining much of its original livery, belonged to the Navy Weapons Test Unit, Point Mugu, California and is seen over the Caribbean in July 1999. The carrier deck image is of an F-4G 'Wild Weasel' with a light brown low-visibility scheme trialled over North Vietnam. (both US Navy)

Right One of the Navy's finest air-superiority fighters of the last century, Vought's F8U Crusader first took to the air on 25 March 1955. It entered operations exactly two years later with VF-32 and served for the next 30 years with Navy and Marine squadrons. The last Navy Crusader squadron, VFP-206 to fly the type disbanded on 29 March 1987. The pair of RF-8Gs seen here belonged to VFP-306 in 1981 (US Navy)



Below Seen here in March 1983 are a quartet from the Navy's crack aerobatic team, the Blue Angels. The Hornet entered operational service on 7 January 1983 with VMF-314 and 1,098 had been delivered to the Navy before production switched to the FA-18E Super Hornet. (US Navy)



Above Grumman's swing-wing F-14A Tomcat air superiority fighter first flew on 21 December 1970, with initial deliveries going to VF-1 and VF-2, both based at Miramar, California in September 1974 seen here. The early years of the Tomcat were not the happiest, with engine-related problems leading to a number of losses. Meanwhile, associated company development costs brought bankruptcy perilously close. The engine problems were finally overcome by installing the GE F100 in the interim F-14A+ and F-14B. With the more powerful F110 fitted, the Tomcat took on the additional strike role, further enhanced with the major avionics improvements in the F-14D. Never operated by the Marines, the Navy took a total of 679 F-14s, the last of which, flown by VF-31, was retired on 4 October 2006. During 1974, Iran ordered 80 F-14s, of which 43 were delivered before the overthrow of the Shah. Because of the Iranian dimension, on its withdrawal from Navy use, most Tomcats were promptly scrapped to prevent parts falling into the wrong hands

Below and below right Designed as a 2-seat all-weather bomb-hauler from the outset, Grumman's A2F-1, later A-6 Intruder made its maiden flight on 19 April 1960 and joined its first squadron, VA-42, just under three years later, in February 1963. Deployed over Vietnam, the A-6, of which 890 were accepted by the Navy, was to be adopted as a tanker KA-6D and the widely used high powered electronics jamming EA-6A and B Prowler. Although the last Intruder was retired on 28 February 1997, the 4-seat EA-6B Prowler remains in service, currently being replaced by Boeing's EA-18 Growler. Seen here is a Grumman A-6E of VA-35 aboard USS Nimitz releasing its bombs, while the EA-6B Prowler of VAQ-132 'Scorpions' overflies USS John F Kennedy in the Atlantic, 5 December 2004. (both US Navy)





Left and below Known affectionately as 'the Skyhook' Ed Heinmann's Douglas A4D Skyhawk remains in service in parts of the world some 58-years after its 22 June 1954 maiden flight. Designed as a carrier-going light strike aircraft, the A4D, or A-4 after late 1962, so excelled at its task that it outlived the Vought A-7 Corsair II that was built as its replacement. First operational with VA-72 on 27 September 1956, the Navy accepted 2,876 Skyhawks, of which 294 went to other users under US military aid. A veteran of the Vietnam War, the Skyhawk's combat record covers most continents, ranging from the Middle East to the Falklands. The last Navy Skyhawk, an A-4M, was retired in March 1994. Seen here is an A-4E of VMA-33 aboard USS Independence, while the multi-service identity and '7V' on this TA-4B indicates it to be a Reserve squadron aircraft based at Glendale. (Cowin Collection and US Navy)



Above Winner of the prized 1963 VAL competition, Vought's A-7 Corsair II utilised much of the existing F-8 Crusader's structural parts in a much abbreviated airframe, bereft of the Crusader's variable-incidence wing. Flown for the first time on 27 September 1965, the production A-7A entered service on 13 October 1966 with VA-147. Soon to be embroiled over Vietnam, the early TF-30 powered A-7A and Bs were quickly supplemented by the TF-41 engined A-7E. In all, the Navy took 1,491

Corsair II while the US Air Force flew another 459 A-7Ds. Active in the first Gulf War, the last of the Navy's A-7Es retired in June 1992. Seen here is a quintet of A-7Es belonging to VA-25 attached to USS Ranger, while the other A-7E of VA-81 aboard USS Forrestal is unusual in its darker than standard overall finish, necessitating the use of white lettering. (both US Navy)

Left First flown on 4 December 1952, the Navy accepted 1,120 Grumman S2F, later S-2 Trackers, the first operational examples going to VS-26 in February 1954. The last of these carrier-going ASW aircraft, an S-2E was retired in March 1984. Starting life as a Grumman S2F-1 Tracker, the aircraft seen here ended its days as a US-2C operated by Composite Squadron VC-3. The role of composite squadrons ranged from target-towing to urgent carrierboard deliveries. Note the retention of the Magnetic Anomaly Detection (MAD) stinger protruding aft of the fuselage, along with its finish of dark and light grey shades. (US Navy)





Left Ultimately overshadowed by Vought's superior F8U Crusader, Grumman's F11F Tiger first flew as the F9F-8 prototype on 30 July 1954. Subsequently remodelled to incorporate transonic area-ruling as the F11F-1, the type entered service on 8 March 1975 with VA-156 - later VF-111. In an effort to improve performance, the original J65 engine was replaced by the more powerful J79 in the F11F-1F. In all, 201 Tigers were delivered to the Navy, with the type being relegated to advanced training by 1958, followed by full retirement on 29 February 1964. (US Navy)

Right Largely forgotten now, is that in the late 1950s, the production version of Martin's XP6M-1 Seamaster, seen taking-off, was capable of Mach 0.89 at low-level, where Boeing's B-47 was only capable of Mach 0.55. First flown on 14 July 1955, both prototypes were to be lost before the re-engined and re-engineered P6M-2 emerged. As it transpired, the production P6M-2 Seamaster, seen aloft in its midnight blue and underside white finish, was overtaken by the development of the intercontinental ballistic missile carrying nuclear submarine and cancelled on 21 August 1959. (US Navy and Martin)



Left This Lockheed S-3A Viking, seen taxiing aboard USS John F. Kennedy, carries the colours of VS-21. First flown on 21 January 1972, the Navy bought 187 Vikings, the first of which operated with VS-41. Designed for carrier-going ASW duties, some S-3s operated as tankers, while others served as Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) aircraft. In terms of combat, the Viking's honours were limited to the sinking of Saddam Hussein's yacht during the First Gulf War. The S-3 retired from Navy service on 30 January 2009 -eight continuing to fly with NASA. (US Navy)



Right This Lockheed P-3C Orion of VP-23 basks in NAS Brunswick, Maine sunshine during the summer of 1979. A navalised version of Lockheed L-188 Electra, the prototype YP3V-1's maiden flight took place on 19 August 1959. Initial production deliveries went to VP-8 on 22 August 1962. In all, Navy purchases totalled 610, of which 36 were for other users. Operational for more than 50 years, the P-3 is set to be replaced by another airliner derivative, Boeing P-8 Poseidon, alias 737. Note the reversal of light grey and white fuselage finish standard adopted by all patrol units. (McDonnell)



First flown on 21 October 1960 as the W2F-1, the first production E-2As went to VAW-11 in January 1964. In total, the Navy accepted 215 E-2A to E-2C Hawkeyes, including 4 for Israel by early 1994

Going Grey in a Darkening Age, April 1985 To Date

The last quarter of the 20th Century, while never matching the sheer ferocity of World War II, certainly mirrored much of its inhumanity, albeit, through much smaller conflicts. These ranged from the 1975 Lebanese and 1982 Falklands conflicts to the 1990s and the First Gulf War, along with the bitter conflicts as the former Yugoslavia tore itself apart. The Second Gulf War, 9/11 and Afghanistan all indicate the first decade of the new century to have been an equally dismal saga. Among all of this blood-letting, it is interesting to note how Western politicians reacted to the 1989-91 collapse of the Soviet economy. They

embarked, almost universally, on a programme of defence down-scaling, both in size and effectiveness of the forces, to the point, for example, where it is difficult to envisage Britain being able to defend the Falklands, or the US be able to fight two major campaigns at the same time, as they have previously been capable of doing.

On the technology front, the pace of advance has been seriously limited by political constraints, with one possible exception. This centres around the military and naval efforts to improve the means of gathering and disseminating information on any opposition they may face. Unlikely as it may seem, this breakthrough has been brought about mainly by the efforts of former aeromodellers, providing the

airframes and IT enthusiast producing the sensors, who together provide the mass of small, less expensive Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs) employed by the majority of the world's armed forces today. In terms of aircraft marking, the major shift came about in April 1985. First felt by North Atlantic Treaty Organisation partners, including the US Navy, but later more generally adopted, the edict required all combat aircraft to adopt an overall low-visibility scheme of two-tone grey. In this, the basic finish would be light grey, with all markings picked out in a darker tone. Interestingly, while this scheme appears to have been strictly adhered to in the early years, the tendency to revert to more colourful expressions has surfaced in more recent times.



This pair of McDonnell F/A-18A Hornets belong to VF-192 operating off USS Midway in June 1989. Note the markings are an unusually dark shade of grey (US Navy)



Left Seen here is the first of the fully navalised and Americanised McDonnell T-45A Goshawk at its 16 March 1988 Roll-out. Derived from the Hawker Hawk, the first of 223 Goshawks made its maiden flight on 16 April 1988, the type entering service in 1991. The all 'glass-cockpit' T-45C joined the Navy in 1997 and all existing Goshawks are now modernised to that standard. (McDonnell Douglas)



This trio of Grumman F-14B Tomcats of VF-102 flying off USS George Washington on 11 February 1998 employ liberal amounts of red to brighten themselves. (US Navy)



About to make a short take-off from assault ship USS Bataan on 8 January 2002, this fully loaded McDonnell AV-8B+ Harrier II adheres fully to the overall 2-tone grey scheme. All AV-8 Harriers are used exclusively by the Marines. (Marine Corps)

This Grumman F-14B Tomcat two-seater of VF-103, about to launch from USS Theodore Roosevelt on 21 January 2002, fully conforms to the overall 2-tone grey finish, contrasting markedly with VF-102's Tomcats seen earlier. (US Navy)



Below Never widely adopted, this McDonnell F/A-18C Hornet of marine Air Group 11 is seen in Iraq during April 2003 wearing an irregular patterned 2-tone blue and reddish brown scheme (US Navy)



Seen aloft on 24 April 2002, this Lockheed S-3B of VS-31 is operating off USS John F Kennedy. Note the use of black for the Modex Numbers on nose and tail, plus the squadron emblem on the underwing refuelling pod. (US Navy)



Left The Marine Corps has always wielded the most influence over the Bell-Boeing V-22 Osprey's development as befits its status as the type's far largest user. First flown on 19 March 1989, the V-22's protracted development led to mounting concerns over both its reliability and cost. Having survived such criticism, the Marines's VMM-263 took their first production MV-22s in December 2005. Operationally deployed in Iraq by the Marines since late 2007 and later Afghanistan, the Marines MV-22 strength had grown to 11 front-line squadrons, plus one training and one trials squadron by early 2012. The Osprey seen here belongs to VMX-22, charged with developmental testing. A small number of V-22 are also used for Special Operations duties with the US Air Force. (US Navy)



Another recent example of red alpha-numerics is visible on this Boeing EA-18 Growler of VAQ-132 arriving in Japan on 14 July 2012, for a spell of 'Temporary Duty Yonder'. (US Navy)

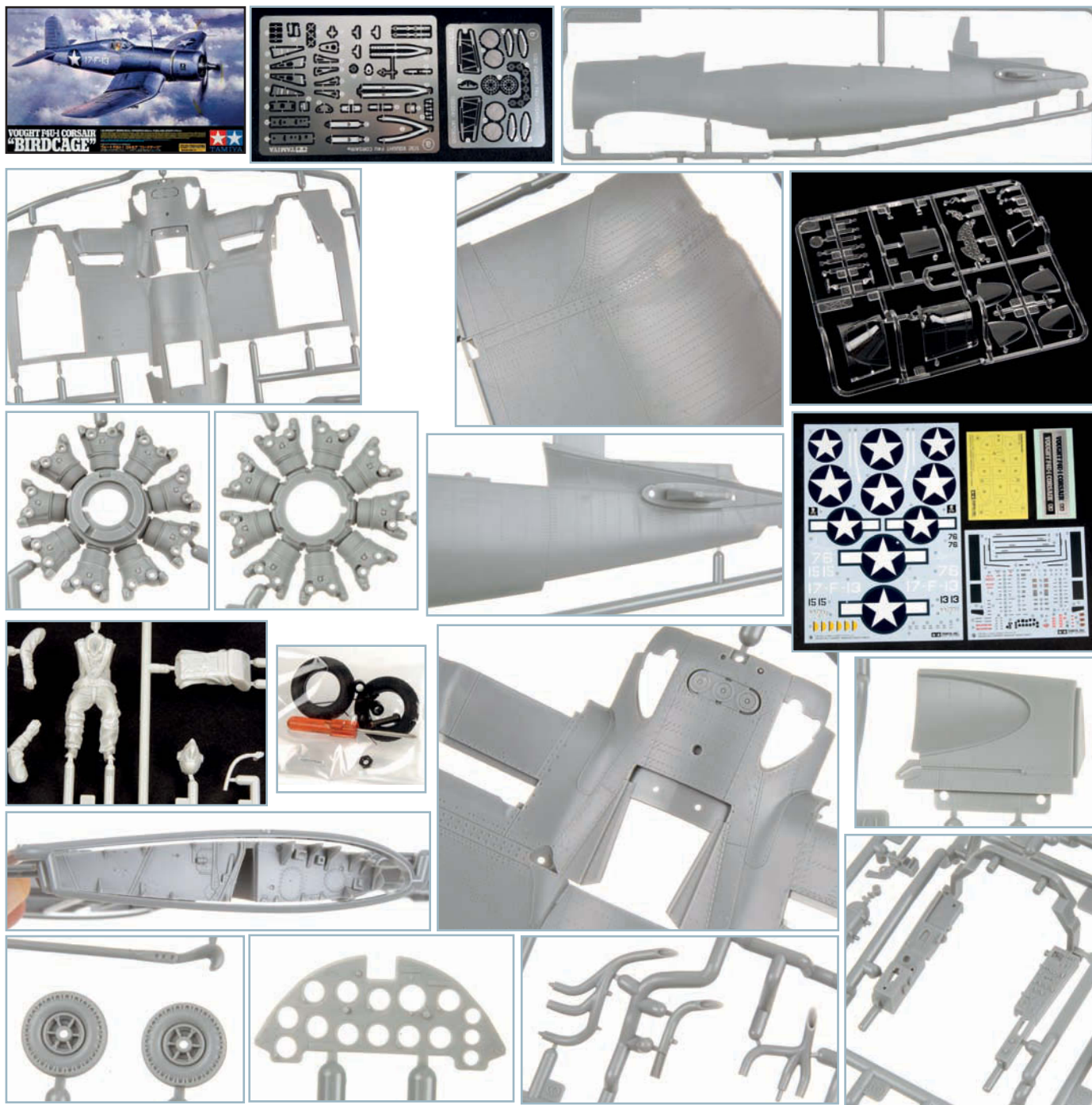


Both Bell Helicopter products, this AH-1W gunship is escorting a UH-1. Both belong to the Marines and both fully comply with the overall 2-tone grey scheme. (US Navy)

A glimpse of things to come. One of the Patuxent River-based Navy Air Test Centre Lockheed Martin F-35C Lightning IIs over Chesapeake Bay in November 2011. While the Marines received their first production F-35Bs on 15 November 2012, the delivery of production F-35Cs for the Navy awaits resolution of carrier-compatibility problems. (US Navy)



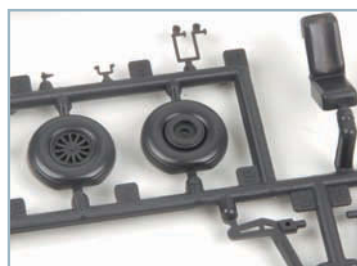
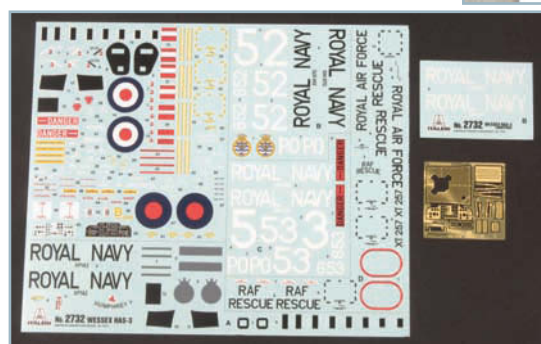
AIR BORN



Tamiya 1:32 Vought F4U-1 Corsair 'Birdcage'

Tamiya have done it again! No one does 1:32 scale aircraft kits like Tamiya as their Spitfire and Mustang kits have shown and now the Birdcage Corsair gets the same treatment. Whilst I would have preferred later versions of the Corsair the good news is that this looks to have been designed with these in mind with a separate spine so no doubt these will follow on. Our sample is an unboxed one but even so there is no doubt that Tamiya have excellent themselves again with what is a stunningly moulded complex kit and not something to fling together over a few hours in front of the telly! The kit gives you the option to have the wings folded - or not and indeed there are separate sections in the instructions for each configuration. As usual Tamiya have provided two photoetched frets, there are assorted screws and rods and a pair of pilot figures, one seated in the cockpit and the other in a casual standing pose. The dreaded rubber tires make an unwelcome return and are perhaps the only real shortcoming of the kit. Plastic moulded versions would be welcome but no doubt the resin aftermarket manufacturers will come to the rescue here. The quality of surface detail over the kit is once again exceptionally good and wont fail to impress even the most cynical modeller. The assembly begins with the complex-looking cockpit and Tamiya have done a great job here both in the levels of detail and with their instructions which continue to impress with their stylish

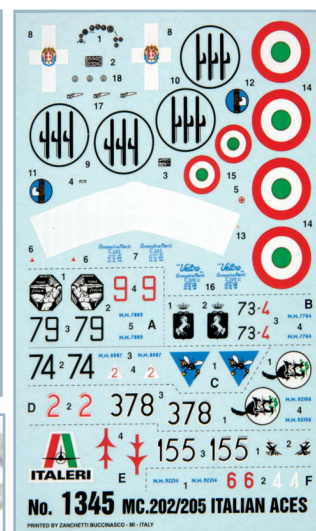
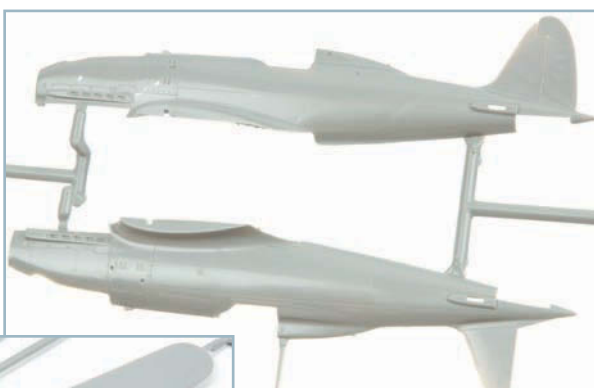
simplicity and clarity. Inside the fuselage there is partial frame detail to allow for a very detailed arrester hook mechanism to be replicated. There is of course a very detailed rendition of the engine which has been designed to allow the cowlings to be removed and has a choice of open or closed cowl flaps. As with the other Tamiya 1:32 kits the undercarriage can be modelled in the raised or lowered position and a simple stand is provided for the in flight option. Control surfaces are all separate and there is the option for raised or lowered flaps too. Tamiya provide a substantial main spar for the extended wing configuration and the complex wheel bays and leading edge intakes are all replicated. It is all quite complex but at least you will have the confidence that everything will fit exactly thanks to Tamiya's legendary engineering quality, like the way that the outer wings are designed to slide onto the main spar. In the folded version all the fold mechanism is beautifully reproduced as you would expect. Three sets of markings are provided across two decal sheets as well as a set of canopy masks but they are all going to be blue! If you need proof that this is indeed the golden age for model making then look no further. Another jaw-dropping release from Tamiya and if this does not have you reaching immediately for the glue and sprue cutters then nothing will. Another benchmark release from the Japanese masters.



Italeri 1:48 Wessex HAS.3

If Albert's Wessex in this issue has you thinking about a future build, here's the next version based on Italeri's new tooling, the HAS.3, seeing service right up into the Falklands War. Read Albert's description of his build for the highs and lows of these kits but I'm sure this version will be a popular one with the very fetching yellow rescue and the blue/yellow Navy schemes with characteristic parrot's nose and camel hump, I really like the look of those big old straight exhausts on the HAS.3 (which look a little askew on the box art?) On opening the box lid the simplistic nature of the kit has you eager to start, along with the sharp moulding and high levels of detail it's hard to resist! A large sprue

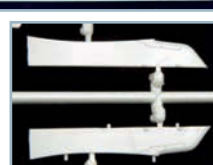
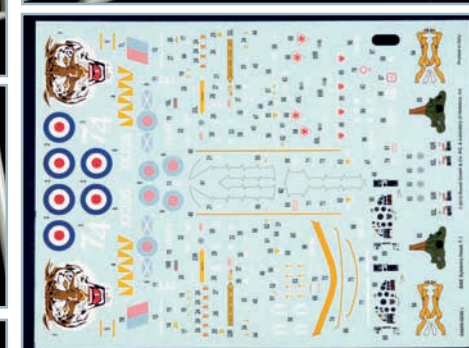
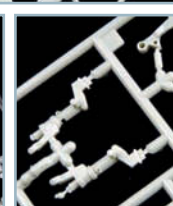
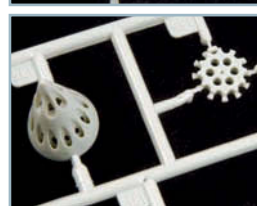
of new parts particular to this version are just as nicely done as the rest of the kit and there's a small piece of mesh and a photoetched fret to help justify the asking price which is more than the average Italeri kit. Another inclusion to add value is the 'Super Decal' sheet with a host of generic detail markings and a Falklands overall grey version, HMS Antrim No 737 Squadron NAS, two yellow and blue schemes also from HMS Antrim in 1982 and a complete yellow rescue version from Cosword 1967. Decals are top-notch quality, I think the trick here will be to get the gloss finishes 'in scale' and you'll have a great looking finished display piece at a really nice size.



Italeri 1:72 MC.202/MC.205 'Aces'

A re-box of Italeri's Macchi C 202 here with one of their tasty 'Super Decals' sheets offering six markings of Italian Aces, albeit on a pretty small sheet at 1:72 scale. One important point that is almost missed on the box art is that there are two full kits included, one depicting the 202 'Folgore' and the other the 205 'Veltro' with subtle differences such as radiators, cowling and spinner shape. The tooling is around ten years old now but moulding is still crisp with nice detail for this small scale across the air-frame and a very simple build offered with around forty parts and a

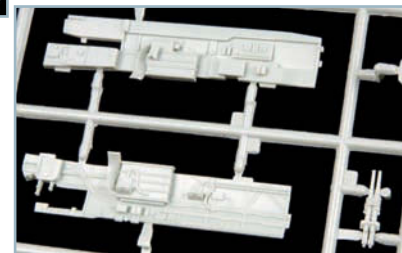
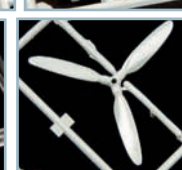
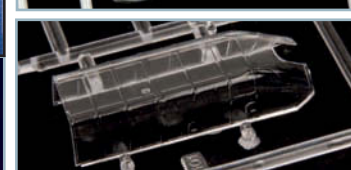
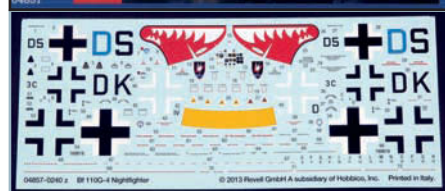
regular design to the assembly. A couple of minor gripes would be the small sink marks on the lower wings where there's also an absence of spent shell ejector holes, and a couple of (avoidable?) ejector pin marks on the visible sections of the cockpit side-walls. No doubt that this is a beautiful aircraft of the era (in both guises) and the camo patterns offered only add to the appeal if you're up to the challenge of airbrushing them in this small scale. A nice set and good value.



Revell 1:32 BAe Hawk T.1A

I think a lot of modellers will be very happy to see the release of the 'armed' Hawk following the successful Red Arrows T.1A boxing. Thankfully gone is that bright red styrene! this kit looks a whole lot more appealing in pale grey and is largely unchanged with the addition of sprues for the under-wing stores (30mm cannon, auxiliary fuel tanks and rocket pods). Typical of Revell's newer toolings the moulding is clean and sharp with some really lovely detail and features to keep modern modellers happy with busy cockpit detail, fully rendered wheel wells, separate ailerons and air brakes all contributing towards the great reputation Revell's big scale Hawk has earned. The large canopy parts are nicely done with the heating element being supplied on the decal sheet which

will need some careful trimming. The decal sheet provides two sets of RAF markings, one from Revell's favourite 'Tiger Meets' in 1997, quality is first rate although many may shun the seatbelt decals, Xtradecal provide a good choice of aftermarket markings should you fancy a camo pattern on your Hawk. This kit is fantastic value for money and provides a great looking model with great presence at this scale, Kinetic have a very up to date version of the Hawk on the market with their '100 series' version but lacking any under-wing stores and with a greater price tag this kit from Revell is sure to be very popular. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Revell 1:48 Me Bf 110G-4

Fully expecting a re-release here from Revell, it certainly is- but is it Pro Modeler, Monogram or Revell? I think we're correct in saying all these '110s are pretty much the same kit / tooling anyway. The sprues look fresh in their pale grey styrene which shows the fine surface details very well reminding us why this has always been a well respected kit originally from the late '90s. On the downside to ageing tooling there's plenty of flash to clean-up on our sample and the canopy frames look soft on detail. The small sprue of figures is missing (an apology being made on a card inside the box- maybe the tooling was unusable for this sprue?) but generally you can build a fine looking night-fighter from the box. With this popular kit being around for some time there's a wealth of

aftermarket parts available to add extra finesse and a couple of corrections (spinners and engine gondolas undersized if I remember correctly?) and with the low cost of Revell's re-pops some customisation won't break the bank. Decals are another point making this a worthwhile purchase, top quality and very detailed markings for two versions; 8./NJG 3, Denmark June 1944 (with a great shark mouth) and 2./Nachtjagdgeschwader 4, Germany 1945- as with all Revell kits swastikas are not provided. With Eduard's '110s established in the market this is still a nice kit which shouldn't be missed. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Wings Cockpit Figures 1:32 Flight Crew Figures

We have a veritable deluge of tasty new WW1 flight crew from Wings Cockpit figures designed to compliment your latest WW1 project and designed to work with some of the recent Wingnut Wings kits. We begin with the sole RFC set in this group which is RFC 07B which is a two figure FE2b Pilot and Gunner set. The Gunner is depicted standing firing his Lewis gun back over the wing in an action packed pose, his leather coat flapping around in the slip stream. The Pilot is shown understandably keeping his head down! A superb set which conveys the whole drama perfectly!. German subject now and LSK 04 is a seated pilot for the cockpit of the Fokker EII-III Eindecker and he comes with a choice of three different heads. LSK 05E is a casually posed Albatros pilot sitting on the lip of his cockpit, legs hanging down the side of the fuselage. The pose is excellent and might well easily adapt to other aircraft and it comes with a choice of three different heads. LSK 05A&B is a two figure Albatros pilot and mechanic set. The pilot is seated in the cockpit fastening his

helmet whilst his mechanic has straddled the fuselage behind him to help him secure his seat belts. Based on a photograph it is a great little scene to dress your completed Albatross. For the cockpit of your Fokker DVII LSK 07A is an excellent hunched pilot sporting a period flamboyant moustache. LSK 08 is a two figure crew set to suit the Hannover or LVG which offers a choice of heads for the pilot and poses which could work either in flight or on the ground. Something more generic now with LSK 10 with is a casually posed standing pilot wearing a greatcoat and flying helmet. The last figure LSK 11 is another pilot wearing a parachute harness and cradling his coffee cup. We love these figures and it is not hard to see the potential of these and the high quality sculpting by Steve Warilow means that they won't be daunting to paint either. Wings Cockpit Figures are available from www.wingscockpitfigures.com and can also be ordered from Model Design Construction www.modeldesignconstruction.co.uk



Masterbox 1:32 Luftwaffe WWII pilots

Anyone who also enjoys figure or armour modelling may be familiar with the Ukraine's MB brand, their figures are amongst the best injection moulded miniatures on the market and this is their second release in 1:32 for the aircraft modeller. The three figure scene depicts two pilots buckling up pre-flight helped by a ground crewman. The sculpting and moulding is excellent with superb facial expressions and delicate detail across the uniforms and webbing. The assembly is straight forward for anyone not familiar with figure modelling and the slightly larger size (compared to 1:35) will aid the novice painter also. A highly recommended addition to your next project or a very nice stand-alone vignette if you enjoy figure painting. Thanks to Masterbox for our sample set.



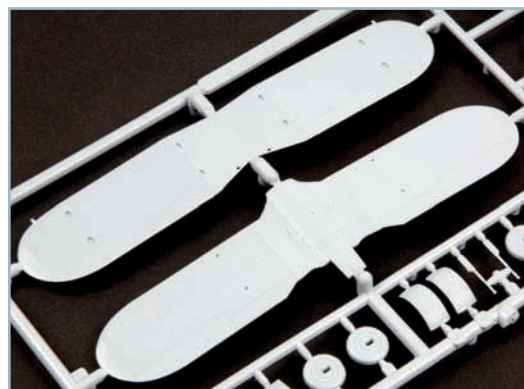
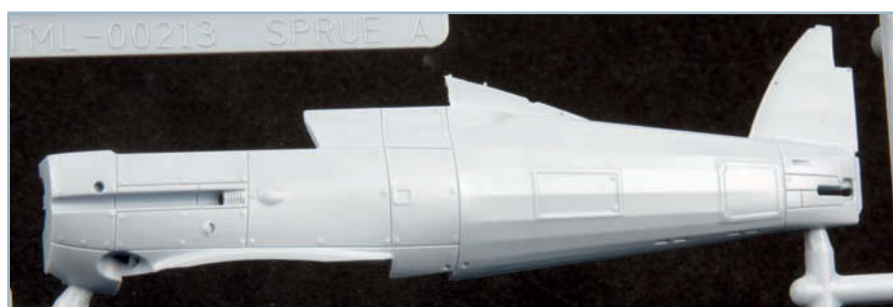
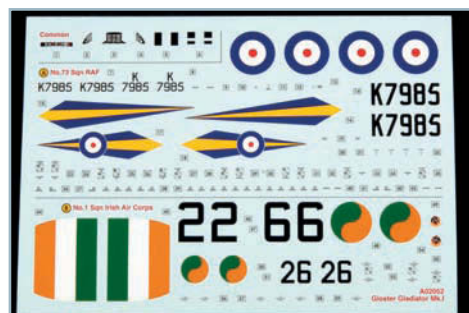
Mr Cap Opener

Gunged-up Gunze lids can be especially tricky to remove without mechanical assistance and Gunze have produced a useful set to help this. The paint pot sits into the soft blue plastic cup and the yellow handle slots over the cap. Using these the most stubborn of lids is cracked open with minimal effort. Completely effective and the alternate end to the handle will also accept Tamiya lids too!



Mr Finishing Surfacer 1500

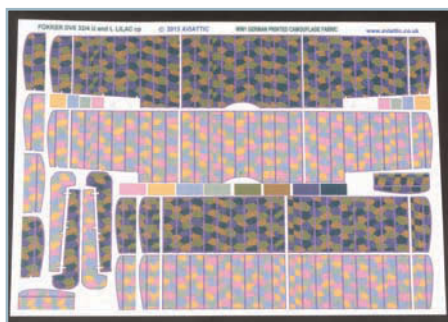
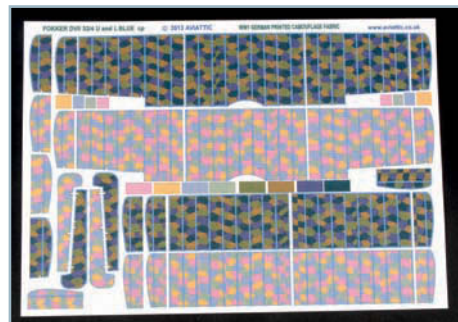
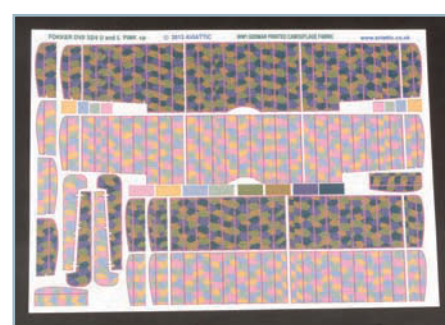
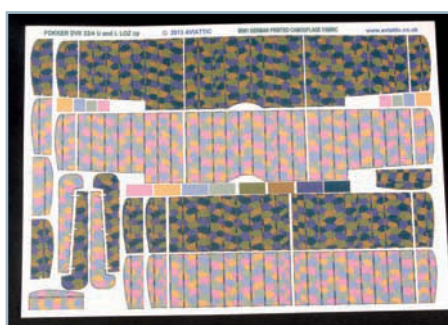
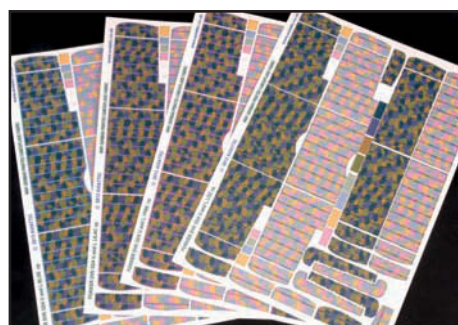
Mr Surfacer is one of our favourite modelling products, so much so that we have considered adding it to our coffee. UK distributors MDC are now carrying a new flavour - 1500. This is obviously a finer mix but handles just the same as the other grades, dries flat and fast as a filler and or texturer and will also work as a primer. Should be an essential on any workbench. www.modeldesignconstruction.co.uk



Airfix 1:72 Gloster Gladiator Mk.I

A brand new tooling here from Airfix and we're continually impressed by the standard of moulding and detail with these new generation Airfix releases. Around fifty parts offers the simplicity associated with the brand but there's enough to excite more seasoned modellers with some very nice fine detail shown off a treat with the nice matt grey styrene. Even more impressive is the way some of the assembly has been designed, the wing struts for example have a small sprue holding the pair at the correct angle which is removed when everything is set in place- a good idea to

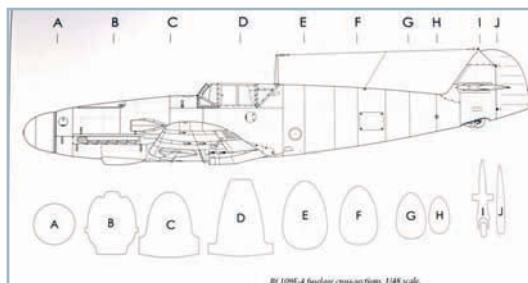
overcome this notoriously tricky process with building a bi-plane. Other nice touches are indicated points for the rigging should you add your own and a choice of weighted tyres or 'in flight' versions without the effect. Cockpit and engine are multi-part affairs with a good standard of detail and a four part engine cowl offers options for display. The Cartograf decals offer two marking choices; the Shuttleworth collection Gladiator and an Irish Air Corps version. An impressive release from Airfix demonstrating that they have plenty to offer new-comers and experienced modellers alike.



Aviatic 1:32 Fokker DVII Lozenge Decals

Aviatic describe their new decal sets as the most realistic representation of the elusive WW1 German lozenge patterns and based on seven years of preparation and research. These first sets are to treat the wings of the Fokker DVII and designed to compliment the recent Wingnut Wings kits. We have four different sample sheets which differ principally in the colour of the rib tapes with a choice of blue, pink, mauve and lozenge patterned tapes on each sheet. The decals are transparent so your wings need to be primed in white before the decals are applied and can also be pre-shaded too for some interesting effects. For me the most impressive thing about the decals is the convincing woven fabric

texture effect that runs through the lozenge pattern. At this scale this is entirely appropriate and lifts these decals to a new level of realism. The colours look good to me and certainly match the samples of original fabric in the Aviatic literature. There are sheets for other aircraft being planned in a similar style and sets of weathered/tinted doped versions too which if they are as good as these initial sets is very exciting. I would say that these are an improvement over those supplied in the Wingnut Wings kits where the linen texture lifts them to a whole new level. Full details of these sets and other releases can be found at www.aviatic.co.uk and you can also follow developments on the Aviatic Facebook page.



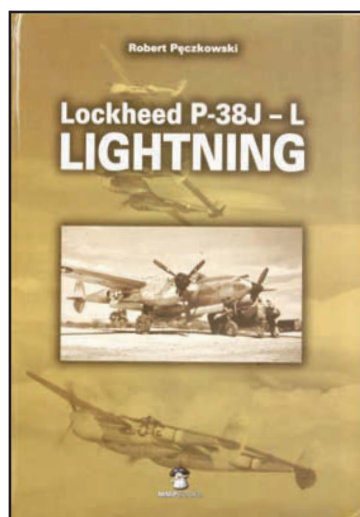
Messerschmitt Bf 109F

By Robert Michulec
B5 softback format, 128 pages
Published by Mushroom Models
ISBN 978-83-61421-75-7
www.mmpbooks.biz



Much has been published on the '109 but a cursory flick through this new release from MMP and you know you're going to learn something new! Focussing entirely on the F version the book covers the development, testing and production of the aircraft with a great mix of visual reference which is ideal for modelling projects; plan drawings, superb colour profiles, period technical illustrations, a great selection of black and white wartime photographs and close-up detail shots of preserved aircraft. A

nice, and very worthwhile extra is included in the form of a fold-out set of 1:48 plans with a huge (620mm!) colour profile on the reverse which is worthy of framing! Around twenty five pages of colour profiles really get you thinking about that next project with a good mix of finishes from tropical to Eastern Front white and some captured markings included for good measure. A great comprehensive and compact reference.



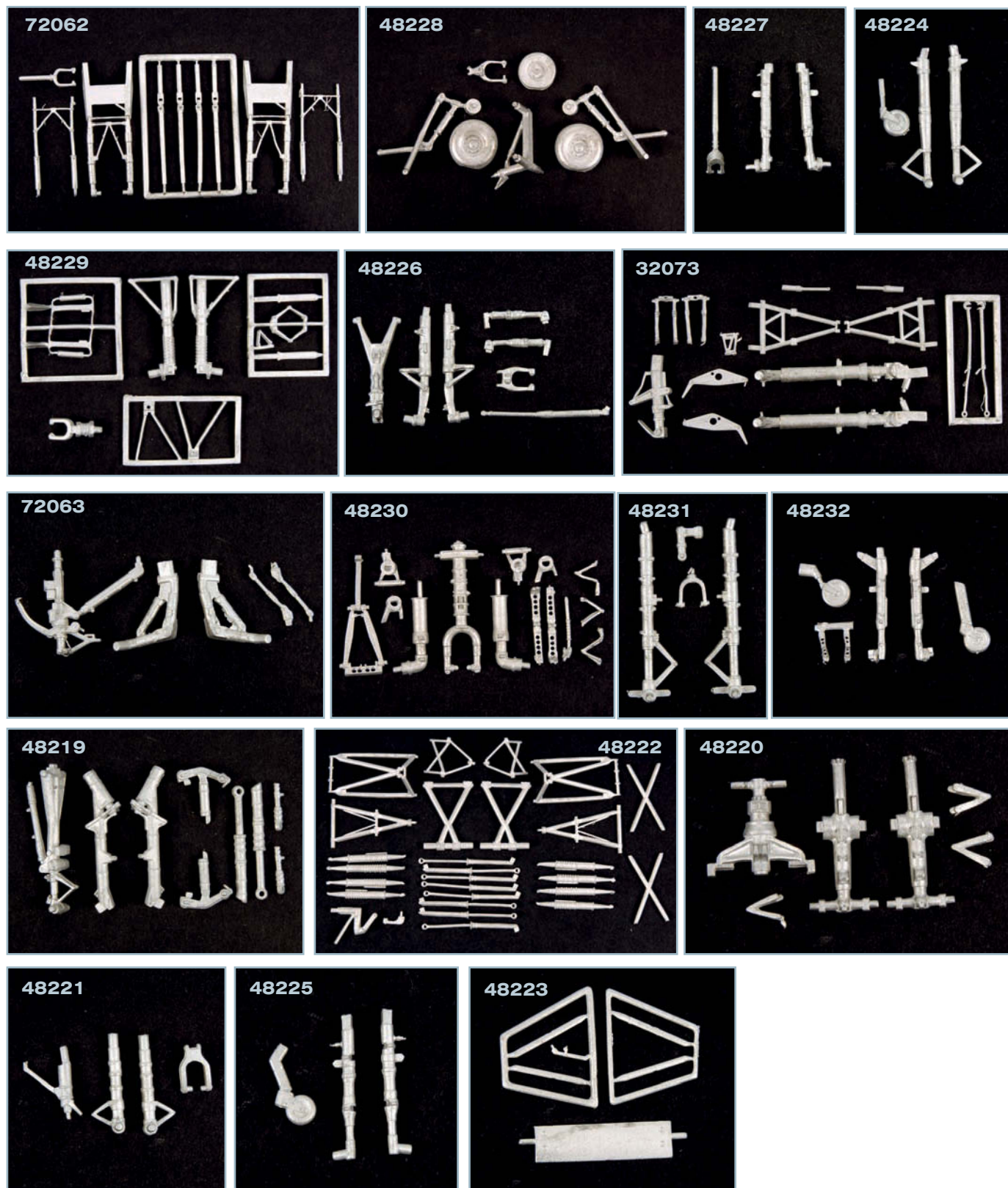
Lockheed P-38J-L Lightning

By Robert Peczkowski
A4 hardback format, 128 pages
Published by Mushroom Models
ISBN 978-83-61421-69-6
www.mmpbooks.biz



Even the slightest fancy to build a Lightning? this new release from MMP will have you searching for the kit you're sure you bought some time ago...With page after page of inspiring large-format colour profiles, plans in 1:72- and even a pull-out double sided A2 size set of plans in 1:48, this is a great modelling reference. Each version of the P-38 is detailed with differences called out in the plan drawings along with period photographs and superb colour profiles. The detailed nose-art illustrations are particularly well done and would be invaluable should you attempt

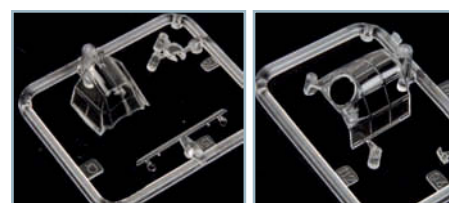
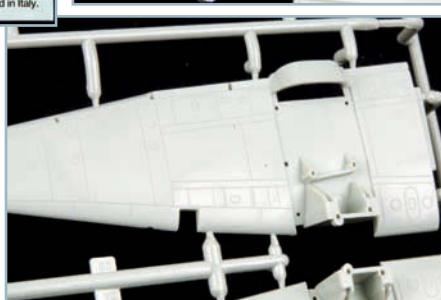
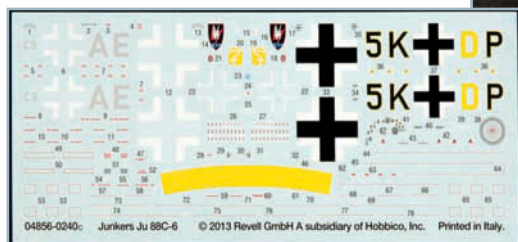
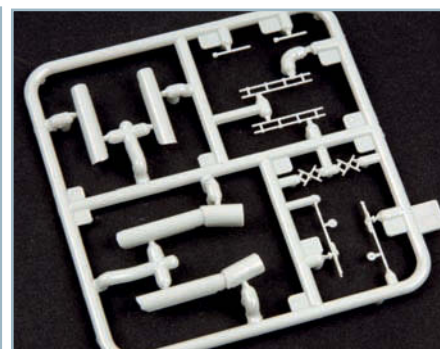
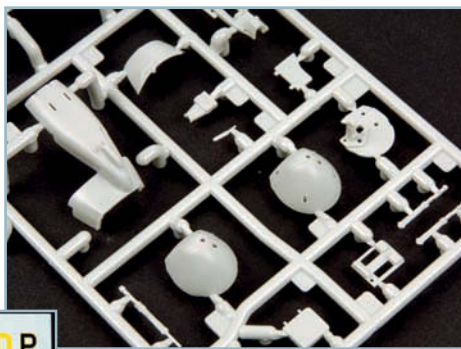
to replicate any of the featured aircraft. Continuing the excellent visual reference are the extensive 'detail photos' chapters focusing on all of the areas you'd want to add detail to, period photographs, shots of preserved aircraft and technical drawings provide a wealth of useable modelling reference. A very concise reference on the P-38, very visual and nicely presented with excellent quality profiles and interesting period photos of the featured aircraft. Recommended reading.



Scale Aircraft Conversions

SAC's range of replacement metal landing gear continues to expand starting with 1:48.48219 for the Kitty Hawk Mirage F1, 48220 provides welcome sure footing for the Airfix Merlin HC3, 48221 is for Trumpeter's Vampire and 48222 is a huge set for Trumpeter's Condor. WWI subjects are covered also with 48223 for Eduard's Fokker D. VII, Tamiya's Bf 109 E3 is a simple set 48224 and similar with 48225 to suit Tamiya's Spitfire Mk.I/Vb and 48226 will do nicely for Kinetic's Kfir C2/C7. Still in 1:48 is 48227 for the Eduard Spitfire Mk.IX, 48228 is designed for the OV-10 Bronco from Testors, 48229 is for the re-released Revell /

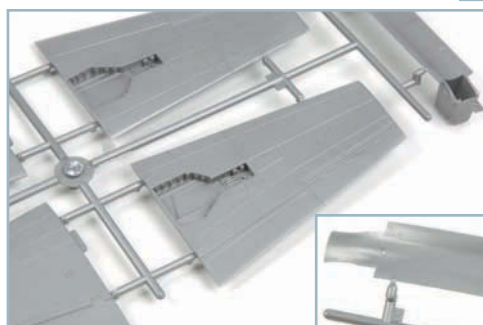
ProModler Bf110,48230 is a very comprehensive set for Trumpeter's A-3 Skywarrior, 48231 provides new sturdy struts for the Hobby Boss Fw 190 and finally 48232 does the business on the new tooled Airfix Spitfire PR XIX. Down to 1:72 72062 provides a sturdy looking set for the new tooled Airfix Lancasters and 72063 is for the Hasegawa F/A-18E/F. One release in big 1:32 is 32073 for Trumpeter's A-1 Skyraider. As usual www.scaleaircraftconversions.com is the place to view the massive range of upgrades.



Revell 1:72 Junkers Ju88 C-6 Z/N

Thankfully it looks like (as expected) Revell will work their way through the Ju88 variants and present us with the handsome C-6 'Nacht Jäger' in Z or N format. Pulling the cluster of small grey sprues from the end-opening box we immediately remember what a superbly detailed kit this is, beautiful sharp moulding, finely rendered surface detail and one of the most comprehensively detailed cockpits you will ever see in 1:72. Glazing parts are suitably up to scratch also and of course we've new parts specific to the night fighter, the flame suppressors on the exhausts are particularly well done but some modellers may look to replace the radar antennae as the moulding process limits the finesse of

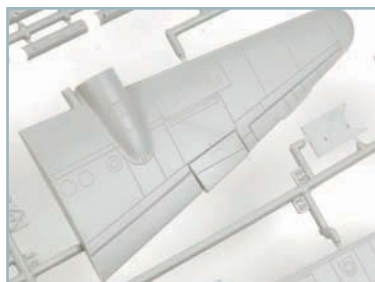
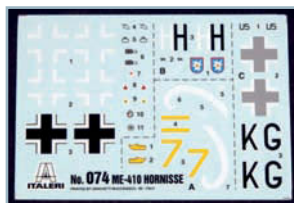
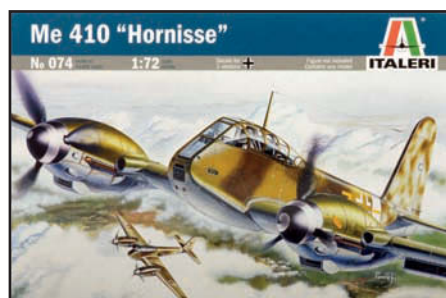
these ultra fine parts. The prominent nose cannons would also look superb as turned brass items, as always, the excellent value offered by many Revell kits means adding a few trinkets won't break your budget. As mentioned already the cockpit should require no more than careful paint detail and seatbelts adding. Two decal options are provided, both Eastern Front, 1943 and all finely detailed complete with stencilling (but sans tail markings). The Revell '88 seems to have fast become the default choice for accuracy, detail and the all important bargain price-tag. Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Revell 1:72 F-89 D/J Scorpion

Another Revell re-pop from the '90s is this F-89, the previously available kit itself looking like a scaled down version of the Revell / Monogram 1:48 release. The kit appears completely unchanged and once you get past the look of the silver styrene (personally I just don't like it) the kit is pretty well moulded and exhibits a decent level of detail bearing in mind again, this kit is over twenty years old. A little flash is present on our sample but overall the kit doesn't really have anything fundamental to complain about, yet on the same hand nothing that really excites. The closest to exciting is the excellent new decal sheet, even if you have the

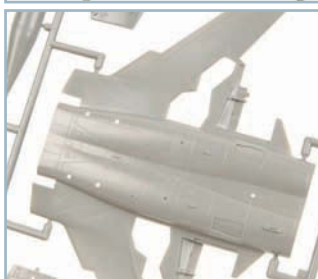
original boxings of some of the Revell re-releases it's well worth a look at the new markings offered as the quality is superb, often worth the low cost of the kits alone. Both a 'D' and a 'J' version can be assembled and there's a set of markings for each, with over twenty years in service there's great scope for alternative finishes if you look to the aftermarket for markings. More good value from Revell, Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Italeri 1:72 Me 410 "Hornisse"

Appearing unchanged from its original 1999 release Italeri's '410 is available again. This is a simple seventy-second kit with very good (if not great) detail which after looking at Meng Model's brand new state of the art 1:48 offering lacks the excitement to get you building immediately. The two grey sprues are well produced, cleanly moulded without flash or sink marks and the panel lines

and control surfaces are nice and fine. There's a choice of three different markings and finishing (the decals remain unchanged) but maybe time to check the references as a 'KG' aircraft is suggested using the granaten werfers? Good clear parts round off what is still a very good kit with (as always!) room to improve a few areas should you wish.



Revell 1:72 F-101B Voodoo

Back on the market is Revell's tasty F101B, originally released in the early '90s as new Revell tooling and not to be confused with the old Matchbox offering. It's been mentioned this kit was scaled down from the Monogram 1:48 release which is no bad thing, checking over the grey sprues there's nothing to suggest this tooling is around twenty years old with some very fine surface detail and crisp moulding. The usual approach is followed with the kit's design with the lower wings and fuselage belly moulded as one piece which is a welcome feature. Falcon and Genie guided

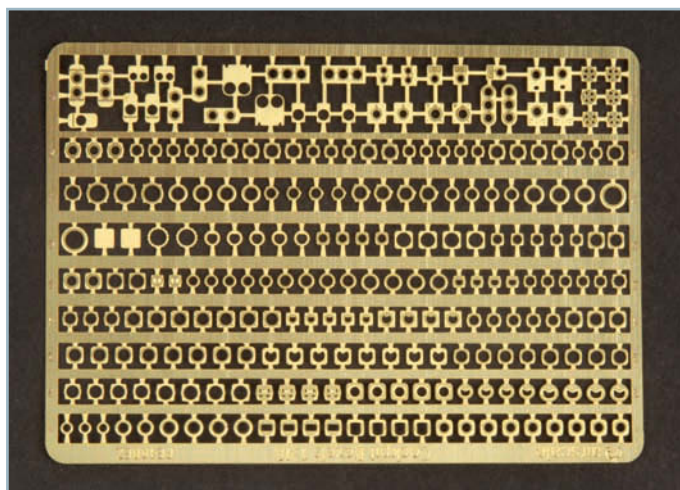
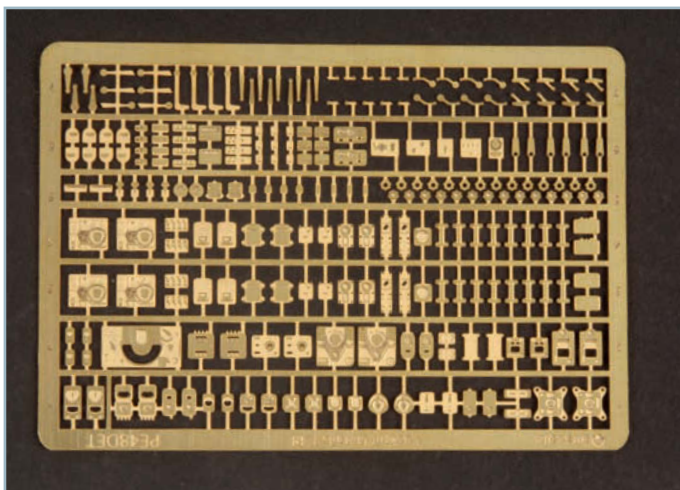
missiles are included along with drop tanks. Decent cockpit and exhaust detail along with optional open air-brakes and canopy mean a good out of the box model can be built, you might want to scout the aftermarket for some more inspiring markings as the two National Guard versions included aren't as pretty as some Voodoos (although the quality of the decals is superb and very detailed). Still a very nice kit from Revell, Revell model kits are available from all good toy and model retailers. For further information visit www.revell.eu or email ukbranch@revell.de



Italeri 1:72 B-57G Night Hawk

Another re-release I'm afraid, the original 'Canberra' based kit from the mid-eighties had a re-vamp in the nineties with the main addition being the 'Wallace and Grommit' style nose and mouth which for me, does nothing to enhance the beautiful lines of the Canberra! The kit is a simple affair carried on two sprues, a surprisingly large model for 1:72. The moulding is clean but we're still in the dark ages of raised panel lines and simplified detail

which really dates this kit. If you can get around this, the kit is regarded as a good representation of a B57G (more so than the Airfix kit it's been commented) with perhaps a couple of dimension issues with fuselage length. Two sets of markings of Vietnam War era 442th CCTS are provided, markings are minimal but the three-tone camo and black undersides will look striking. Our thanks to The Hobby Hawk Company for our Italeri samples.



Airscale 1:48 Cockpit Details and Cockpit instrument Bezels

A couple of new really useful generic photoetched detail sets from Airscale. PE48 DET 'Cockpit Details' provides a range of radio equipment facias, control switches, fuse panels, circuit breaker covers as well as structural braces and assorted control levers and tuning knobs. Its a useful mix of those fiddly bits that are a pain to scratchbuild and yet very often required to sort out some of the more rudimentary kit cockpits. In a similar way set PE48 BEZ provides an extensive choice of instrument dial bezels

for assorted nationalities. Bland instrument panels will be transformed by these suitably delicate parts which are not something that even competent scratchbuilders are comfortable with and this set provides a quick convenient and cost-effective solution to pimp up your instrument panels. Both sets are provided with an illustrated guide for each part in case you cant identify them. These sets along with their 1:32 versions are available from www.airscale.co.uk



Humbrol Washes

Nothing new, but the familiar properties (and smell!) of Humbrol enamel thinners is present here with these 28ml jars of ready to use colour washes which are basically tinted thinner to flow around detail and into panel lines to add either contrast or effects such as dust or rust. Colours include

basics such as black, white, dark green and dark brown and specifics such as dust, sand and an effective 'oil stain' which has a gloss finish. Very convenient but as with all washes and filters on the market 'shake well' to keep the pigment suspended.



Model Design Construction

The ideal upgrades here for your large scale B-17 or B-25 are these flexible .50 Cal ammunition feed chutes and ammunition belts. The Chutes CV32074 are 58mm long and moulded in a flexible resin and have the correct overhanging lip so that the ammunition belt CV32068 will slide up inside the chute exactly like the real thing. This will also enable each part

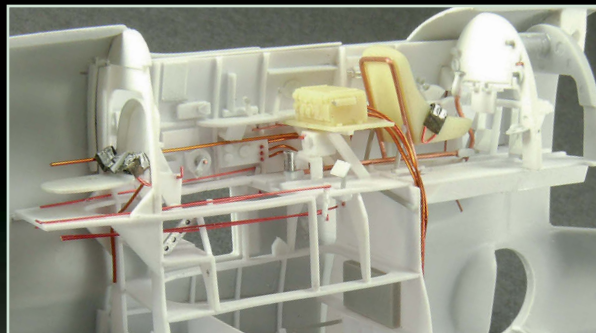
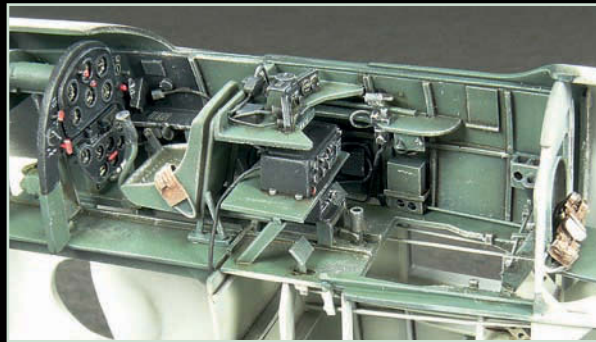
to be painted separately and then your weapons can be positioned as you wish rather than conforming to the kit feed chutes. Excellent! Sticking with weapons and CV32073 is a German MK 103 Cannon with brass barrel and choice of muzzles There is also a dedicated flexible resin ammunition belt CV32071 to go with the cannon. www.modeldesignconstruction.co.uk



Maciek Zywczyk's 1:48th super-detailed 'Sitting Duck'

The Grumman J2F Duck flew for the first time on 2 April 1936. It was single-engined amphibious biplane with a large central float, blended into the fuselage, which also housed the retractable landing gear. It was capable to take off and land both on conventional runways and water. It was used by the US Navy, Marines, Army Air Forces and Coast Guard, mainly for general utility and light transport duties, but also for observation, reconnaissance, anti-submarine patrol, air-sea rescue, photographic and target tug missions. It was powered by Wright R-1820 Cyclone engine. Early -1/-4 series were very similar, later -5 & -6 models had different engine cowling and revised forward fuselage.

Grumman and Columbia Aircraft Corporation built 645 airplanes in total, 12 of them were delivered to the Argentine Navy. After the war, J2F saw service with independent civilian operators, as well as the armed forces of Colombia and Mexico. Several surplus Navy Ducks were converted for use by the United States Air Force in the air-sea rescue role as the OA-12 in 1948.





Classic Airframes Kit

My main interest is fighters, but also amphibious aircraft and flying boats. Classic Airframes released both versions of the Duck - early and late. The kit was rather expensive when first released, but it later became available at a more attractive price. It's a short run with some resin details, first impressions are that the quality of parts is good. The aircraft has a simple shape, so I thought I could just build the kit and avoid major detailing and scratchbuilding. The kit was purchased and as usual after my initial enthusiasm had passed, it was put aside.

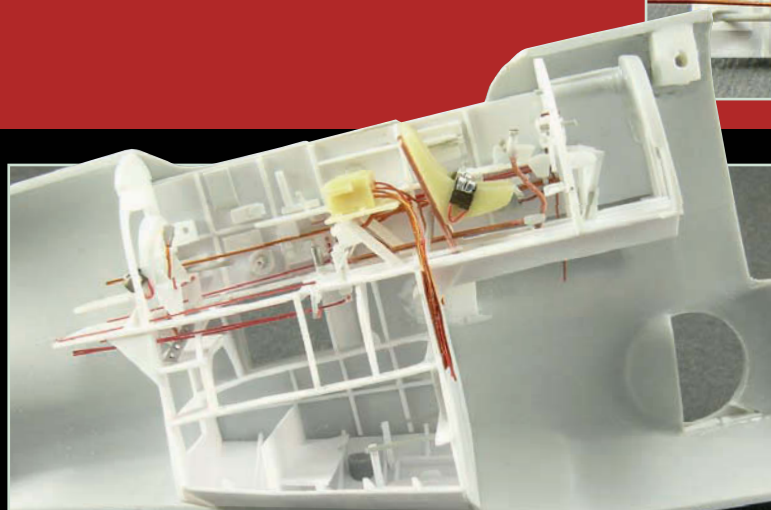
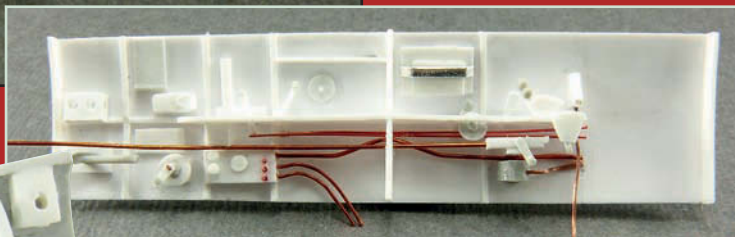
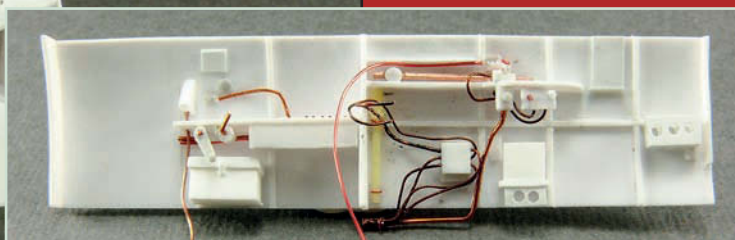
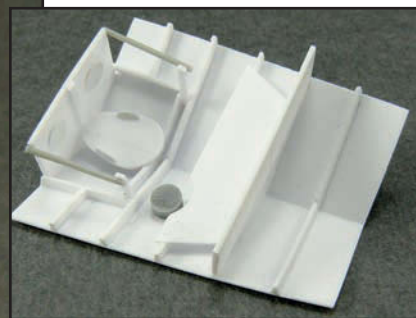
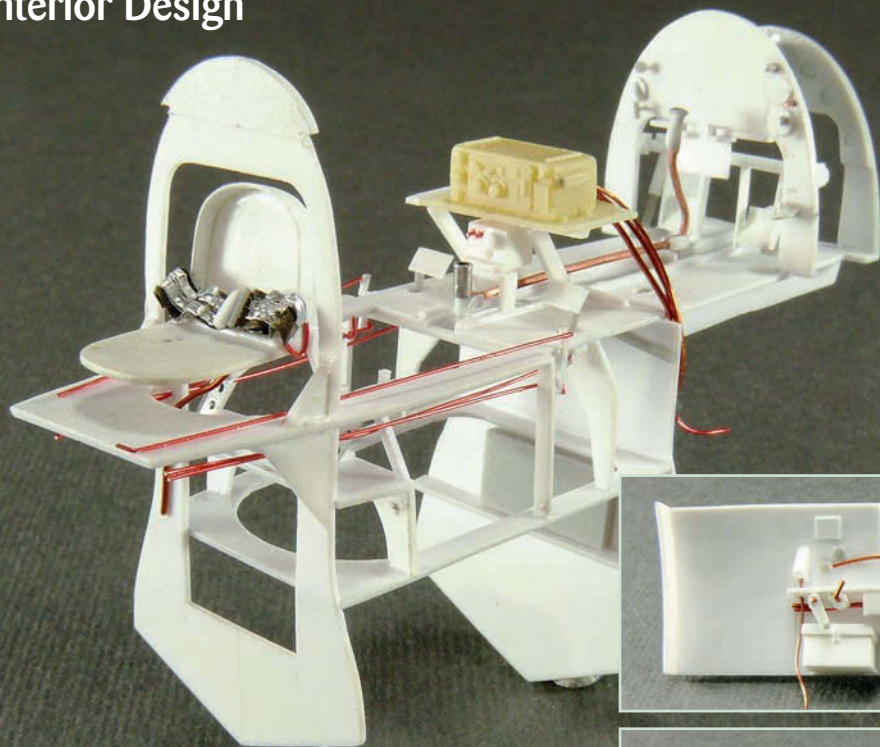
I searched for information on the Duck, but not very much was available. There is a distinct lack of information and images on the interior. This worried me because a lot of it would be visible

through big windows on both sides of the fuselage. AJ Press announced a release of a monograph about the Duck, so I hoped for some images or drawings of internal structures and equipment. This is great book with many photos, profiles and scale plans, but again doesn't contain much material on the interior. Fortunately there are some workarounds on www.seawings.co.uk, where masses of detail photos can be found. I've also found a lot of different pictures on the internet, but these show the same areas in different layout without description of which version they relate to. My knowledge was incomplete, but nevertheless I decided to start the project. I thought that there were not much chance to get more information later, so delaying wouldn't help.

Grumman J2F-5

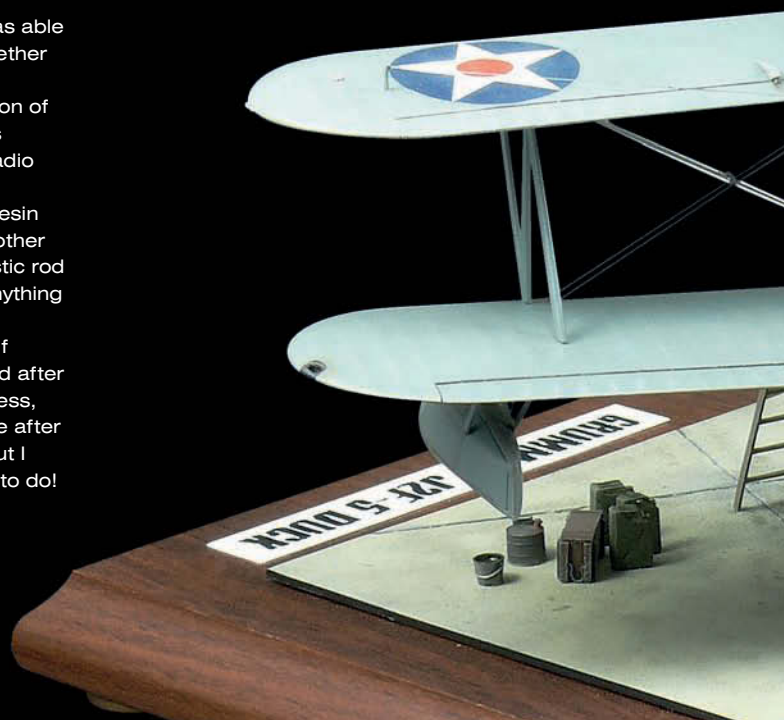
Sitting DUCK

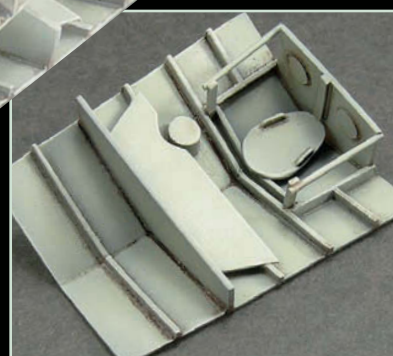
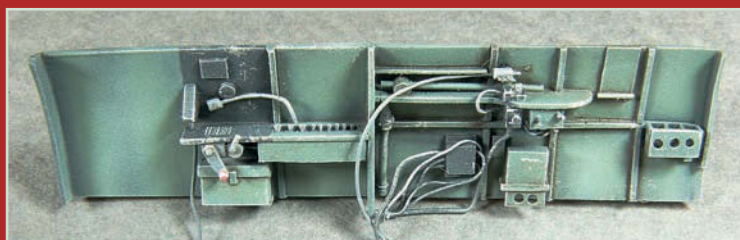
Interior Design



All parts of a kit were carefully examined and it became obvious to me, that all interior has to be built from scratch. Only some resin details were partially usable. Moulded in fuselage details were deleted and the plastic thinned down. The fuselage halves didn't have any locating pins, so I decided to fabricate some. A lot of measurement and fitting was needed to build floors and frames, which created the main subassembly. I also decided to made new walls from plastic card instead of detailing the fuselage halves. Plastic strips were glued to fuselage in order to ensure correct position of all main parts relative to each other.

The main components were designed this way, so that I was able to put all or some of them together to check the fit. After the main structure was ready, the position of the main components such as instrument panel, seats and radio with support was determined. Smaller details followed. The resin seat and radio were used, all other elements were built using plastic rod and strips, copper wire and anything that was available. The fit was checked several times to see if everything could be assembled after painting. This was a long process, and it became tight in fuselage after all equipment was installed, but I made it and it was a lot of fun to do!





The interior colour, unfortunately, despite a long search and consultation on different modelling forums I couldn't find clear information. After some hesitation I decided the most likely paints for the late version Duck - bronze green for cockpit and 'Grumman Grey' for fuselage interior. I covered all elements with dark paint, and then created some shading while spraying my own mix of bronze green. After masking off green areas, light grey was sprayed in the same way. Details were painted using different paints and some dark wash and drybrushing followed. Unfortunately some areas of my scratchbuilt interior became invisible after fuselage halves were joined.

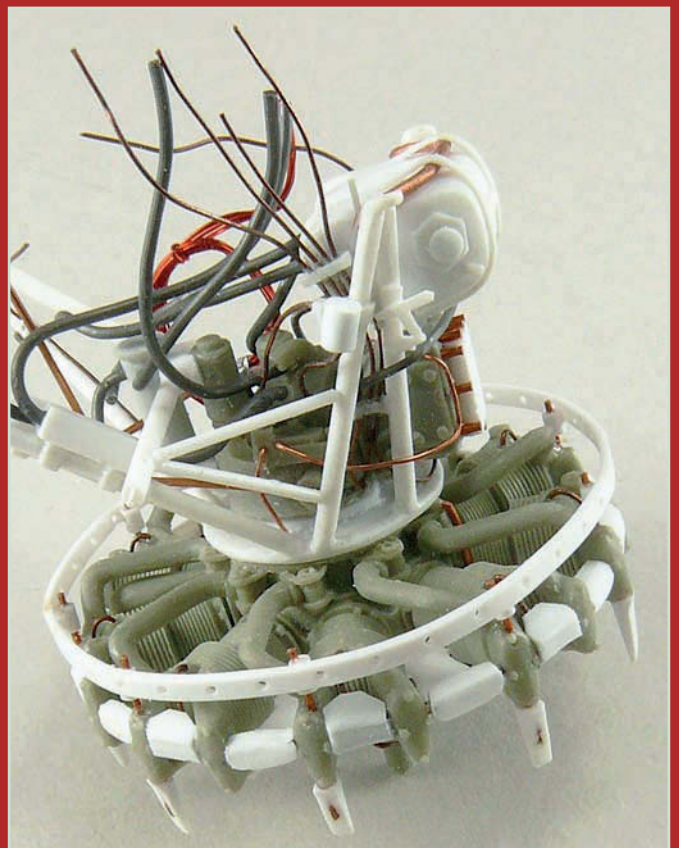
Exterior construction

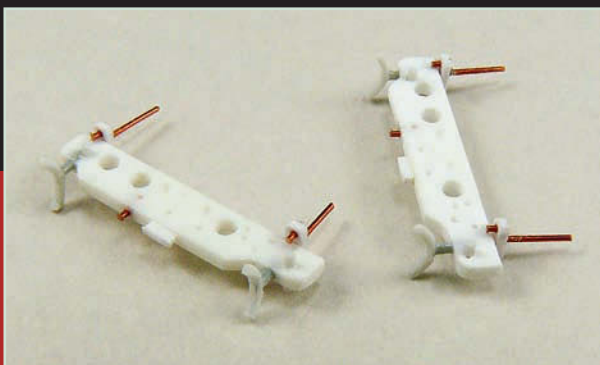
This supposed to be a fast project, but kit is not an easy one, so just putting it together is a task. I invested lot of work on the interior, so the project had already been extended. I couldn't get out of my mind images of engine accessory compartment, so I decided also to open this area. There is a resin engine in the box, but it is just one piece which would look good if cowlings were closed. There is a line of superb resin engines made by Vector, they provide great amount of detail and look superb after assembly, so I decided to buy one, suitable for the Duck. Panels were cut off and fuselage walls made from plastic card. A lot of measuring and dry fitting was necessary to create an engine mount. The engine, front wall, engine mount and fuselage were equipped with pins so I was

able to accurately check their alignment. All removable panels were thinned down in order to achieve a more realistic look. Engine cowlings were created using thin plastic card and strips. Then the whole area was detailed with parts from my spares box, wire, profiles and anything that was available. Even great resin engine missed some details, perhaps because it was not specific J2F version. In the next step I started to prepare the assembly of wings, vertical and horizontal stabilizers. I decided to create attachment points with metal rods and tubes in order to maintain the correct geometry of the plane and strengthen the joints. Brass pipes were glued at correct angle of dihedral to the plastic bulkhead and fuselage halves joined. The tubes protruding from the

fuselage were cut off and I glued metal rods, that fitted over the tube, into the wings and this way I was sure that they would be correctly positioned after assembly. Stabilizers were prepared in similar way.

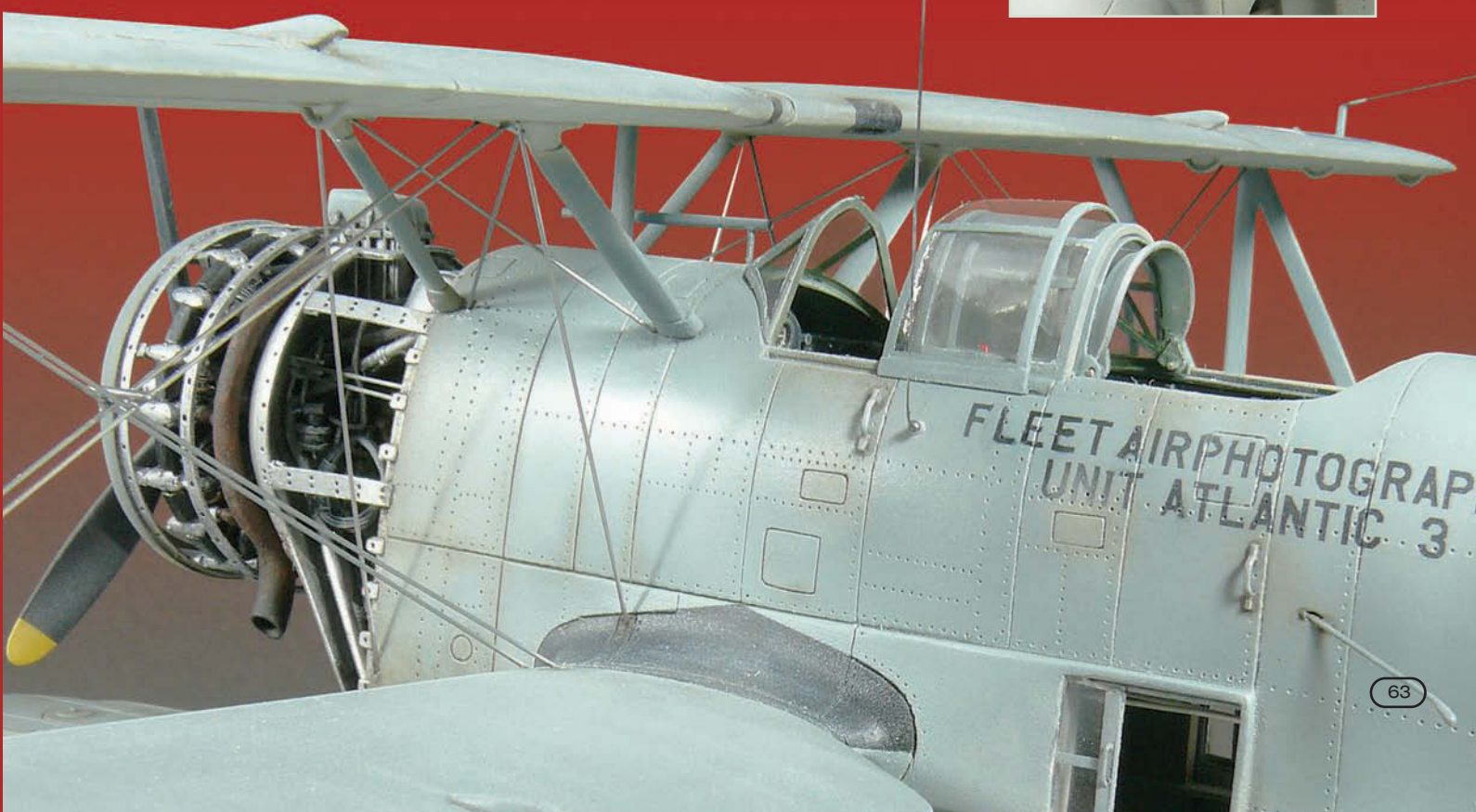
All surface details on the fuselage were filled with super glue and the surface sanded smooth. Careful measuring was necessary to mark new panel lines before scribing. Images of original plane show, that rivets were very visible. A riveting tool was used, then all marks pushed with needle and sanded. This way a rather subtle but visible effect was achieved, not overdone in my opinion. It's rather simple job, but very time-consuming, and some areas had to be filled and corrected.





Trailing edges of wings and stabilizers were thinned down and surface details restored. Lower wings and stabilizers were glued to the fuselage and finally whole airframe was assembled. The outer wing struts were strengthened with steel wires. A single vertical strut was glued to the fuselage and this way upper wing could be temporarily fixed with tape in correct position. This enabled me to make fuselage struts from scratch. The canopy is injection moulded but not very clear and thin, the fit is also not the best.

I also had vacformed versions from Squadron, so I decided to combine both and make them in the open position to show the interior as much as possible. The windscreen and middle section is injection moulded, the rear sliding parts were cut off from vacformed versions and trimmed to fit under middle section, some guides were glued to the fuselage. I wanted to do the same with front sliding part, but it was too small and didn't fit over middle section so I had to make new one using the kit part as master.



Paint and Presentation

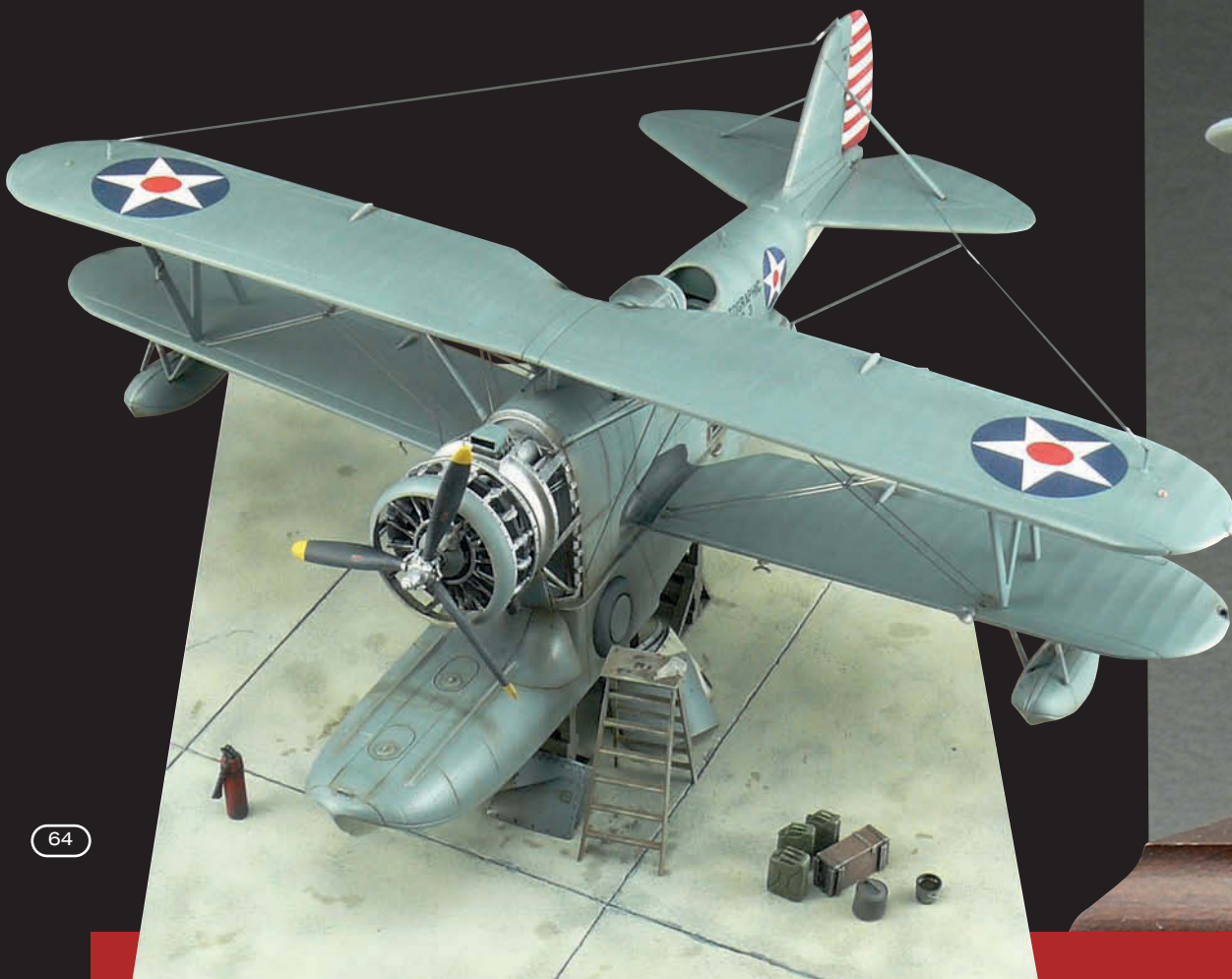
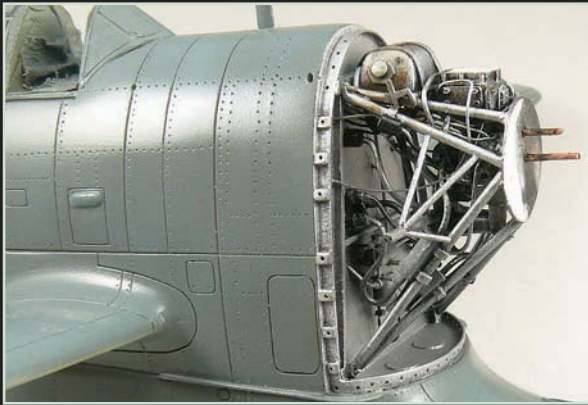
The box art is really great and I wanted to finish my model in this variant of U.S. Navy camouflage. It's rather simple, but looks great. There are decals for white/red rudder stripes, but after careful masking and painting the result was much better. Decals are good but due to my mistakes I had to correct errors with paint. Few layers of Gunze clear gloss were sanded in between and finish of airframe was smooth. Weathering with artists oils gave to the paintwork more interesting look. The upper wing was painted separately. I was not sure, how the engine accessory compartment was painted, aluminium seemed to be the best choice. Camouflage was masked off and walls of fuselage painted and weathered, along with engine, engine mount, interior of removable panels and cowlings. Everything was prepared well, so assembly went smooth. Steel wire was used for rigging. Wire was cut to

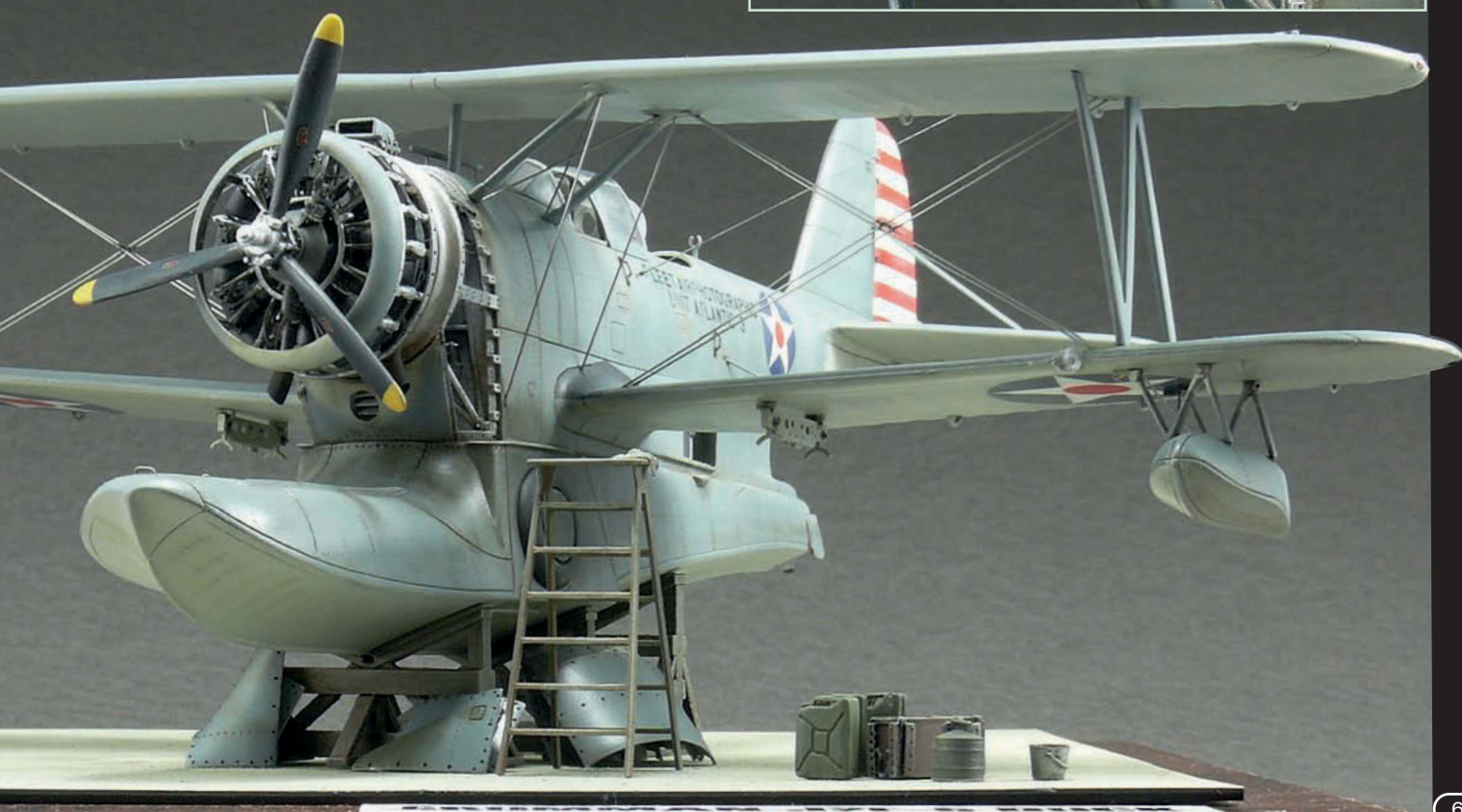
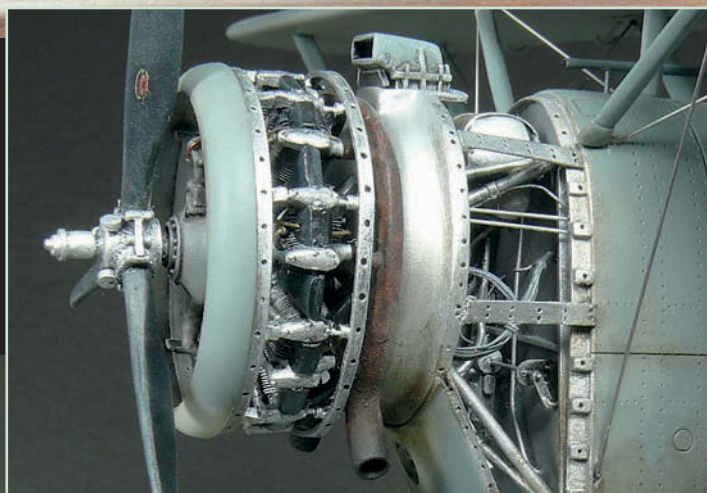
length and inserted in earlier drilled holes, then secured with superglue.

One of the major issues in modeling project is a concept of displaying model. Duck was equipped with landing gear and easiest way would be to put it on wheels, but unfortunately in this configuration plane looks a little strange. I wanted to show it's great outline with gear up. Originally I thought of putting the plane into the imitation of water in small diorama. This solution has many disadvantages - the aircraft would only be visible only above the water line and I have absolutely no experience with model water effects. Some Ducks were based on ships, kept on special stands, but I couldn't find good image to determine what they looked like, especially deck of ship in his area. In addition, the machine I was building was stationed at Norfolk, and I couldn't find

information to confirm if it operated from a ship.

I asked for help on various forums and on Hyperscale I got exactly, what I was looking for. Good drawing of wooden stands for Widgeon, that enabled repair or maintenance of the landing gear. I suppose the Duck was serviced in a similar way, so some dimensions of stands were matched to J2F and made from scratch. Plastic card was used to create an imitation of concrete and glued to base after painting. The whole should represent a plane undergoing some maintenance, the undercarriage is retracted, and some removable panels are put aside. It took a lot of time to finish this project, sometimes I was tired of fighting with very thick plastic, sparse amount of information and a fair amount of tedious steps, but it's done and I'm happy with the end result.







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